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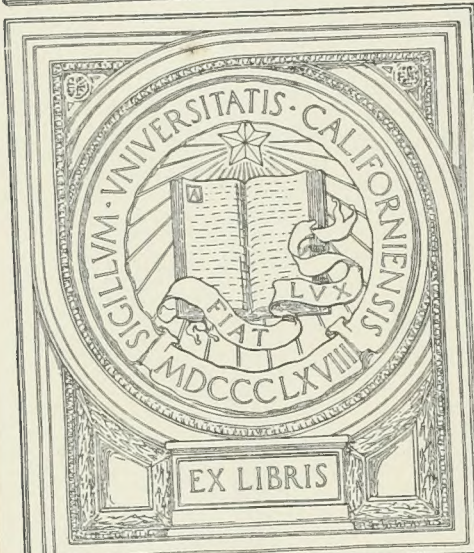


GIFT OF
W.M. Van Dyke

Sir WILLIAM THOMPSON'S special work in science occupies him in a region where it is rather difficult for men of merely ordinary culture to follow in his footsteps. The higher departments of electrical and magnetic speculation, where scientific explorers of his eminence are engaged, are fields in which less advanced students soon lose their way, and grow bewildered. There will, probably, be few persons outside a limited circle who will be able to realise the importance of those researches in terrestrial magnetism in which he describes Sir EDWARD SABINE as engaged, and in which he touches so nearly on great results. But there is one passage in the present address that will be more readily comprehended, and in which new speculations are contributed to a branch of scientific investigation which has taken a strong hold of late on the popular fancy. Sir WILLIAM THOMPSON has out-Darwined DARWIN in his conjectures concerning the origin of life on this planet. Peremptorily rejecting all theories of spontaneous generation, the new President declares his firm belief that under no circumstances has life been evolved from meteorological conditions of inanimate matter. When the world first settled into shape and cooled down on the surface sufficiently to tolerate vegetable and animal existence, Sir WILLIAM holds it to have been impossible—in opposition to all scientific knowledge—to suppose that life began of itself. In reading his speech simple-minded people may begin to glow with the hope that the British Association is about to declare itself in favour of ADAM and EVE, but in this expectation they will be disappointed. The new theory is an enlargement of that by which animal life and vegetation may be accounted for in the case of new volcanic islands emerging from the sea. Seeds and germs of various kinds are supposed to be wafted thither by the winds, or floated thither by the waters from other portions of the animate globe. So when this globe itself was altogether inanimate, it is conjectured that the earliest germs found their way here in consequence of what may be loosely described as cosmical accidents. Other worlds may have come into collision, or in some other way have been wrecked in space, and scattered germ-bearing fragments may to some extent have fallen upon the surface of the earth, there by degrees to be developed into plants, zoophytes, animals, gorillas, and, ultimately, Presidents of the British Association. It is a bold theory, the only fault of which is that it merely thrusts back certain difficulties for a stage, and does not clear them up.

achievement yet made in molecular theory of the properties of matter is the Kinetic theory of gases, shadowed forth by Lucretius, definitely stated by Daniel Bernoulli, largely developed by Herapath, made a reality by Joule, and worked out to its present advanced state by Clausius and Maxwell. Joule, from his dynamical equivalent of heat, and his experiments upon the heat produced by the condensation of gas, was able to estimate the average velocity of the ultimate molecules or atoms composing it. His estimate for hydrogen was 6225 feet per second at temperature 60 deg. Fahr., and 6055 feet per second at the freezing-point. Clausius took fully into account the impacts of molecules on one another and the Kinetic energy of relative motions of the matter constituting an individual atom. He investigated the relation between their diameters, the number in a given space, and the mean length of path from impact to impact, and so gave the foundation for estimates of the absolute dimensions of atoms, to which I shall refer later. He explained the slowness of gaseous diffusion by the mutual impacts of the atoms, and laid a secure foundation for a complete theory of the diffusion of fluids, previously a most refractory enigma. The deeply penetrating genius of Maxwell brought in viscosity and thermal conductivity, and thus completed the dynamical explanation of all the known properties of gases, except their electric resistance and brittleness to electric force. No such comprehensive molecular theory had ever been even imagined before the nineteenth century. Definite and complete in its area as it is, it is but a well-drawn part of a great chart, in which all physical science will be represented with every property of matter shown in dynamical relation to the whole. The prospect we now have of an early completion of this chart is based on the assumption of atoms. But there can be no permanent satisfaction to the mind in explaining heat, light, elasticity, diffusion, electricity, and magnetism, in gases, liquids, and solids, and describing precisely the relations of these different states of matter to one another by statistics of great numbers of atoms, when the properties of the atom itself are simply assumed. When the theory, of which we have the first instalment in Clausius and Maxwell's work, is complete, we are but brought face to face with a superlatively grand question, what is the inner mechanism of the atom. In the answer to this question we must find the explanation not only of the atomic elasticity, by which the atom is a chronometric vibrator according to Stokes's discovery, but of chemical affinity and of the differences of quality of different chemical elements, at present a mere mystery in science. Helmholt's exquisite theory of vortex motion in an incompressible frictionless liquid has been suggested as a finger-post, pointing a way which may possibly lead to a full understanding of the properties of atoms, carrying out the grand conception of

" scientific, turn us away from them for a time,
" they come back upon us with irresistible force,
" showing to us, through nature, the influence of a
" free will, and teaching us that all living things
" depend on one ever-acting CREATOR and RULER."

Sir WILLIAM THOMSON is very much to be congratulated upon this inaugural address, which was a masterpiece.

## THE LATIN MOTTO IN THE PUMP ROOM.

*To the* EDITOR *of the* BATH CHRONICLE.

SIR,—I do not wonder that "Quondam Paedagogus" is puzzled by the verses of Lucretius, as quoted by him from Forbiger's edition. My references are to Lucretius vi. 552, 868, and 1072, in Professor Munro's edition. And if he will refer to the note of that eminent critic on the first of these passages, he will see that *aqüarum* may be pronounced as four syllables, the first two short; from which it follows that the verse in the Bath Pump Room is, as I said, metrically correct. I do not contend that the first *a* is long, though I do not concede the "impossibility" of its being so.

F. A. PALEY.

Cambridge, February 10, 1873.

*To the* EDITOR *of the* BATH CHRONICLE.

SIR,—There can be little doubt that "Quondam Pædagogus" is right in his proposition that the first syllable of *aquarum* can by no possibility be regarded as long, though his reference to "Wakefield followed by the best editor Forbiger" is not re-assuring. "Quondam Pædagogus" can hardly be ignorant of the editions of Lucretius by Lachmann and by Mr. Munro, scholars and critics, between whom and such men as Wakefield and Forbiger, the distance is simply immeasurable.

In the three lines referred to by Mr. Paley (Mr. Paley never referred at all to the No. 2 of "Quondam Pædagogus"), Munro, following Lachmann, reads—

1. Fit quoque ubi in magnas aquæ vastasque lucunas.
2. Quæ calidum faciunt aquæ tactum atque saporem.
3. Vitigeni latices aquai fontibus audent.

(Lucr. vi. 552, 868, 1072.)

And they are sufficiently explained by Lachmann's note, "Similiter Horatius, isque unus inter omnes, *siluæ* tribus syllabis dixit." The authority is conclusive against Mr. Paley's proposal to pronounce as *acqua*, but the Pump-room inscription may still be defended by treating *aqüarum* as a quadrisyllable. I hardly see, by the way, why "Quondam Pædagogus," in reading *aqüai* as a quadrisyllable, reads it thus—*a-quu-a-i!* unless the extra *u* is a misprint.

GERALD A. R. FITZ GERALD.

New University Club, 12th February.

which will is manifested.

In their attempts to establish scientific propositions ancient inquirers were at a great disadvantage, since they were unable to verify their doctrines either by experiment or by very extensive observations. Yet the Epicureans, working on the lines laid down by Leucippus and Democritus, contrived to anticipate with more or less definiteness some very important results of modern research. Lucretius teaches, for instance, that atoms are indestructible; and he makes good his position by an argument which, so far as it goes, is perfectly sound. This argument is that matter obeys unchanging laws, and that it could not do so if its ultimate elements were in course of time either worn or broken by use. Again, he maintains that atoms are not all of the same kind, but vary in size, in shape, and consequently in weight—a theory which was destined to do splendid service, for it was the principle which enabled Dalton to give coherence to those laws of combining proportion by which he revolutionized chemistry. Other remarkable deductions were that atoms are continually in motion, even when they are grouped in solid matter; that they have always moved, and always will move, with the same velocity; and that motion is the only ultimate form of energy. Mr. Masson even thinks that Lucretius had some perception of chemical affinity; but the only evidence for this is that he applies the word "concilium" to any combination of atoms by

* "The Atomic Theory of Lucretius." By John Masson, M.A. (London: George Bell and Sons. 1884.)

THE

# NATURE OF THINGS:

## A DIDACTIC POEM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

OF

*TITUS LUCRETIUS CARUS.*

VOL. I.

Strahan and Preston,
New-Street Square.

Drawn by F F Burney — Engraved by J G Walker

*Pale trembling with alarm with supplicating knee*
*And lifted eye she sought compassion felt*
*Fruitless and unavailing*

THE

# NATURE OF THINGS:

## A DIDACTIC POEM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

OF

*TITUS LUCRETIUS CARUS,*

ACCOMPANIED WITH THE ORIGINAL TEXT,

AND

ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES PHILOLOGICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

By JOHN MASON GOOD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

*LONDON:*

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1805.

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# PREFACE.

THERE is no poem, within the circle of the ancient Classics, more entitled to attention, than the "NATURE OF THINGS," by TITUS LUCRETIUS CARUS. It unfolds to us the rudiments of that philosophy which, under the plastic hands of Gassendi and Newton, has, at length, obtained an eternal triumph over every other hypothesis of the Grecian schools; it is composed in language the most captivating and perspicuous that can result from an equal combination of simplicity and polish, is adorned with episodes the most elegant and impressive, and illustrated by all the treasures of natural history. It is the Pierian Spring from which Virgil drew his happiest draughts of inspiration; and constitutes, as well in point of time, as of excellence, the first didactic poem of antiquity.

In consequence, nevertheless, of the cloud that, for many centuries posterior to the Christian æra, hung over the Epicurean system, which it is the professed object of Lucretius to develop, this exquisite and unrivalled production became generally proscribed and repudiated, till at last it was rarely to be met with, but in the libraries of the learned, or the curious. Having accompanied, however, Epicurus in his fall, it was destined to be a partaker of his rise; and hence, on the revival of letters in the thirteenth century, when the atomic doctrine became once more a subject of investigation, the NATURE OF

THINGS was dragged forth from its learned dust, and its beauties re-investigated and unfolded. On the resurrection of science, Italy first threw off the mouldy shroud that enveloped her; and here first we behold a restoration of the labours of Lucretius. Brescia has the honour of having, on this occasion, led the way, by a folio edition of the original, correctly and sumptuously printed by Ferrandi in 1473; Verona, Venice, and Bologna, speedily and successfully followed. Early in the ensuing century, various impressions appeared in France and Germany; and at last, under the superintendence of Creech, in our own country, in 1695.

To enter into an examination of the comparative merits of these different editions of the original, would be to overstep the bounds of my character as a translator. It is sufficient to observe, that of those which have hitherto appeared, the most approved, and by far the most correct, are Havercamp's and Wakefield's; the latter of which was only published in 1796, and by the elegance of its typography, the accuracy and re-integration of its text, and the rich and comprehensive commentary with which it is accompanied, has amply atoned for the tardiness with which the merits of Lucretius were acknowledged in Great Britain. The Wakefield edition has since been reprinted by M. Eichstadt at Leipsic, or rather is at this time reprinting; the first volume only having hitherto made its appearance, which comprises the entire text, and what was certainly much wanted, a new and very copious Index. Its size is octavo, and its date 1801. The remaining volumes are to contain the notes, together with observations by the learned Editor himself.

The popularity of Lucretius, however, has hitherto been more retarded by the want of poetic talents in his translators, than from any deficiency of original editions; and Great Britain, which was latest

in acknowledging his vernacular merit, possesses, to the present hour, no version that can communicate any adequate idea of it to those unacquainted with Latin; and is still far behind what has been repeatedly effected on the Continent.

The best version which has hitherto been offered to the public, is that, in Italian, of the justly celebrated Alessandro Marchetti, who died in 1714, after having been Professor of Mathematics in the University of Pisa during the greater part of his life. Marchetti's translation is in blank verse, and is fully entitled to the high commendation bestowed upon it by his friend Graziani, himself a celebrated poet, as well as chief secretary of state to the duke of Modena. "You have translated this poem," observes he, in a letter to the Professor, "with great felicity and ease; unfolding its sublime and scientific materials in a delicate style and elegant manner; and, what is still more to be admired, your diction seldom runs into a lengthened paraphrase, and never without the greatest judgment *." I shall often have occasion to refer to this version as I proceed, and the reader will hence be enabled to form his own opinion of its excellence. Marchetti, like Lucretius himself, died before his labours were in possession of the public; and, probably in consequence of an interdict from the papal chair, the first edition of his translation was printed in England, by George Pickard, 1717, in 8vo. being three years after the translator's decease. But a much more elegant edition was brought forwards at Paris, in 1754, on the fine woven paper of Olanda, and accompanied with engravings from imaginary, but well-executed designs by Cochin. Yet the value of this splendid edition is much diminished by an almost incalculable number of errors, which have unaccountably been suffered to creep into the text. A new and more

* L'ha poi. V. S. illustrissima tradotto [illegible] con facilità e felicità grande, mantenendo altissime e scholastichè con stile delicato, e con maniere soavi; e quel che è più da ammirarsi, senza [illegible] parole, ne se ne è allontanata colla parafrasi, se non rarissime volta, e con grandissimo giudizio.

correct edition, with similar engravings, was proposed at Paris about ten years ago: but the political troubles in which France has ever since been involved, have prevented it from being carried into execution.

The translation of "The Nature of Things," however, forms not the whole of the poetical labours of Marchetti; for he published, in 1707, a version of the odes of Anacreon in quarto; and left behind him, in manuscript, a complete translation of the Æneid in ottava rima, and an unfinished philosophic poem, written in imitation of Lucretius and Empedocles, upon THE NATURE OF THINGS, adapted to the lateſt discoveries, and the moſt approved modern systems. It was to this work he intended to have prefixed the beautiful dedication to Lewis the Great, which the Abbé Arnaud alludes to in his Journal, and conceives to have been designed for his translation of Lucretius. It is much to be regretted, that Marchetti did not live to complete this, which appears to have been his favourite, poem, and upon which he had laboured with close application for many years. It is seldom that so large a share of poetic and mathematical talents concentrate in the same person. Signora Borghini, who had been a diligent pupil of the professor's, and had as successfully followed him in the study of poetry as of the mathematics, pays him the following compliment in one of her Canzonets, a collection of which was afterwards published at Naples, and dedicated to her preceptor himself:

Però che dentro saggj, eccelsi, e santi
Carmi, con nuovo stile, e sovrumano.
Principj ignoti, e meraviglie ascose
Chiari per te vedransi; e se davanti
A te sì dolcemente il gran Romano
Scrisse DELLA NATURA DELLE COSE,
Di più degne e famose
Opre tu rieto andrai, che al vero lume
Sciogli per l'alta via sicure piume.

Thy heavenly verse, sublime, and sage,
Propounds, through each unrivall'd page,
Truths that, till now, ne'er sprang to birth,
The mysteries of heaven and earth.
By thee the mighty Roman sings
In sweetest strain, THE RISE OF THINGS;
But thy own work shall yield thy name
A worthier and a wider fame:
A firmer plumage shall display,
A loftier flight, and brighter day.

For translations of Lucretius I have hitherto sought in vain amidst the literature of Spain and Portugal; and I have reason to believe, that not one of any reputation exists in either country. This, however, is not a little extraordinary, since it is a fact which I trust will sufficiently appear in the ensuing attempt, that both Lope and Garcilasso de la Vega, Ercilla and Camoens, have been indebted to THE NATURE OF THINGS, for many of their best and happiest passages; and Frachetta has written in Spanish a laborious commentary upon it, in a thick quarto volume, entitled, "Breve Spositione di tutta l'Opera di Lucretio." This last work I have examined, and shall occasionally refer to. In the German language, a version from the pen of M. F. X. Mayr made its appearance in two volumes octavo, in 1784 and 1785. It was printed at Vienna by Mösle, but I have not been able to obtain a copy. I have, however, seen De Wit's Dutch translation, published in 1709, but without being induced to imitate it. The translation is in prose, accompanied with allegorical plates, and strangely subdivides every book into a variety of sections.

Of all countries, however, that have attempted to naturalize THE NATURE OF THINGS, France has been most prolific in her exertions. Her earliest effort was a prose version published in 1650 by M. de Marolles, an abbé of Villeloin, and, for some reason that I am not

acquainted with, dedicated it to Christiana, queen of Sweden. The translator makes a boast of having completed his labours in less than four months; but he appears to have possessed no talents for the undertaking, and rapidity is the only boast of which he can avail himself. "If the abbé had succeeded," says Bayle, "only as well as the English translator Creech, he would have had a better fate; but he neither understood Latin nor the Epicurean philosophy *." Yet, for want of a better, this miserable performance long continued to be a marketable book: a second edition of it was published in 1659; and a third, in 1663, in which the author attempted to prove, that he was better acquainted both with the philosophy and history of Epicurus than the world had given him credit for, and hence subfixed a version of the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius: at the same time, dissatisfied with the unsuccess of his first dedication, he descended from thrones and sceptres, and addressed it to the president of the *Academie Royale*, which was then just instituted. It is singular to observe, that in 1677 this very translation, hastily as it was professed to have been written, and abounding with errors of every kind, was itself translated into French verse by James Langlois, who hereby unequivocally proved himself to have been totally unacquainted with the language in which the poem he undertook to versify was originally composed. It appears to have met with the contempt it deserved; and the vanity of the versifier seems to have been solely excited to this absurd effort by a truly metrical translation of detached parts of Lucretius, in which the classical muse of Moliere was well known to have indulged herself about this very time, and the ill fate of which might have served as a subject for one of his own tragedies. The first intention of Moliere was to have versified the entire poem; but finding that he was hereby threatened with a larger portion of labour than he could find time to engage in, he confined his rhymes to its more decorative parts, and

* Bayle Dict. Hist. Art. Lucrece. rem F.

delivered the rest over to plain prose. A translation thus strangely and uncouthly tesselated, had it ever been completed, must have been highly unworthy of the Roman bard; but it would, nevertheless, at that time, have been no inconsiderable present to the writer's countrymen. It must be confessed, moreover, that Moliere was well qualified for the office of an interpreter from the course of his juvenile studies in the college at Clermont. Gassendi, the modern restorer of the doctrine of Epicurus, was, at that period, one of its professors: the favourite disciple of Gassendi was Chapelle, who, both now, and through the whole of Moliere's life, was his most familiar and intimate friend. With Chapelle, the French dramatist frequently attended the professor's philosophical lectures; and though never a convert to his tenets, from the literary conversations, which hence ensued between himself and his fellow-student, not only during their residence at college, but in their subsequent days, he must have been sufficiently initiated into the doctrines of the Epicurean system. Moliere, as he proceeded with his version, uniformly rehearsed it both to Chapelle and Rohaut, who jointly testified their approbation of the performance. But it was predestined to perish abortively, although, at length, brought very nearly to its completion. A servant of the translator, to whom he had committed the care of his dress-wig, being in want of paper to put it into curl, most unluckily laid hold of a loose sheet of the version itself, which was immediately rent to pieces, and thrown into the fire as soon as it had performed its office. Moliere was an irritable man, and the accident was too provoking to be endured: he determined never to translate another page, and flung the whole remainder of his version into the flames that had thus consumed a part of it.

In 1685 appeared another translation, in French prose, by the baron des Coutures, who also published, in the same year, an apologetic treatise, entitled, "Sur la Morale d'Epicure." To his version of the

NATURE OF THINGS is prefixed a life of its author, drawn up from the materials already furnished him by Ciunta, Le Blanc, Hubert Giffane, Lambine, and other commentators upon the poem: and to every book is appended a small body of notes, many of which show him to have been better acquainted with his subject than de Marolles. As a translator, however, he has succeeded less than as an expositor. His version is prolix and paraphrastic, inelegant, and devoid of spirit. It, nevertheless, obtained a second edition in 1692; and a third in 1708, but without any material alterations in either. De Coutures was succeeded in his attempt by Alexander Deleyre, who is well known as one of the writers of the Encyclopedie, but still more so, as the author of a translation of Lord Verulam's philosophic treatises. Deleyre died in 1797, and left this version among several other inedited works. It has not yet been published, nor is it much entitled to such a distinction, if not superior to his metrical romances set to music by his friend Jean Jaques Rousseau. Deleyre was, in all probability, well acquainted with the Epicurean hypothesis, but he possessed little of the fire of genuine poetry. He may have been a well-meaning man, but he was, in the early part of his life, a rigid Jesuit, and in the latter, a morose philosopher.

Be the merit of the manuscript version of Deleyre, however, what it may, the necessity of its publication is now altogether superseded by the very elegant translation, in French verse, of M. Le Blanc de Guillet, which was neatly printed at Paris in two volumes octavo, in 1788 *, and dedicated to M. Dionis du Sejour; and perhaps, by its appearance and intrinsic merit, first of all induced Deleyre to relinquish his design. The version is accompanied with the original text

* I have also seen a work which pretends to be a translation of the NATURE OF THINGS, and which was published at Amsterdam, in French prose, about twenty years ago. It is an anonymous performance, and rather an abridgement of the poem than a full version. Its size is small octavo, and it entitles itself *Traduction Libre*.

in alternate pages, which, from a casual examination, I believe to be Creech's: it is decorated with plates, illustrated by notes, and introduced by a comprehensive preliminary discourse, which contains a biography of the original author, chiefly drawn up from Giffane, or as he is more generally called, Giffanius, and Creech, and possessing whatever inaccuracies have been accidentally committed by the latter, together with some general observations upon the Epicurean hypothesis. In this hypothesis, M. de Guillet does not, however, appear to have been very deeply versed; and hence, even in the translation itself, he is sometimes incorrect, and still more frequently obscure. It is, nevertheless, upon the whole, a work of great merit, and ranks second amidst the translations of Lucretius which have yet appeared in any nation. Of course, it ranges immediately next to that of Marchetti.

In our own language, the first attempt to naturalize the poem before us was by Evelyn in 1656; upon which occasion, almost every friend of his who could write in rhyme seems to have flattered him with complimentary verses. Evelyn, however, and it is a proof that he was not altogether deficient in taste, still felt himself unqualified for the task. He had, at this time, only published a small fascicle containing the first book, with an appendix of notes which discover no small degree of general reading and acquaintance with his subject. But conscious, upon actual trial, of his own inability, and trembling at the difficulties which lay before him, he took shelter under a critical remark of Casaubon, and doubted, to adopt his own version of it, "whether it were possible for any traduction to equal the elegancy and excellency of the original;" at the same time adding, that "he is persuaded, men will rather take the pains to *converse* the original, than stay till the rest be translated into English." With the first

book, therefore, closed the labours of Evelyn; and no one who is acquainted with his version, will regret that it did not extend farther.

About twenty years posterior to this unsatisfactory effort, Creech introduced, before the public, his translation of the entire poem; and shortly afterwards published, at the Oxford press, a new and valuable edition of the original, with Latin notes. Creech was an admirable scholar, and no contemptible poet; but he generally wrote with too much rapidity, and hence became alike inaccurate and inelegant. He was, moreover, at all times, more studious to convey a knowledge of the simple idea of his author, than of the ornamental dress in which it was conveyed. His version of Lucretius, however, is sometimes loaded with ideas, and even whole lines which have no foundation in the original, and sometimes abruptly curtailed of others that are absolutely necessary to the force and elucidation of the argument. Of such redundancies and defects I shall occasionally have to take notice in the prosecution of the work before me. But after all, it is no small share of praise to Creech, that he completed a task, which Evelyn, in a copy of complimentary verses addressed to the former on the publication of his poem, frankly declares, he was unable to accomplish, and which no one, to the present moment, has since dared to encounter.

Dryden was, at this time, a young man; but though green in years, he was mature in poetic powers; and equally disgusted with both translators, he was resolved to try the effect of his own talents, and, if possible, to give his countrymen some idea of the real excellencies of the original. For this purpose, he selected a variety of passages, but chiefly of the ornamental kind, as the beginnings and endings of the different books; and upon these he bestowed all the polish and elegance

of which he was master. The applause to which he was entitled, he abundantly received; and had he translated the entire poem with the same felicity and spirit which he has infused into these detached morsels, the version of Creech would have been long since forgotten, and that of the ensuing pages, perhaps, never made its appearance. Yet Dryden has, in general, rather paraphrased than translated; his lines are often double the number of the original; and he has, at times, unfortunately attempted to improve his author by ideas of his own creation.

To Dryden's specimens succeeded a prose version of the entire poem by Guernier and his colleagues. It was published in 1743, in two volumes octavo, and, like the French version of de Guillet, is accompanied by Creech's edition of the original in opposite pages. The translator's motive for preferring prose to verse, he thus explains in a brief introduction: "Our language, though copious in compliment and love-expressions, is but very narrow and barren in terms of art, and phrases suited to philosophy; and the technical words we have invented move coarsely and cloudily in verse. For these reasons, the poetical translation of Creech is often more perplexed and harsh than the original; it is, in many places, a wide and rambling paraphrase; in others, the translator contracts and curtails his author, and is frequently guilty of omissions for many lines together. This is no wonder; for the poet he undertook is not to be confined and shackled by the rules of rhyme; his verse is nearest, and runs more naturally into prose than any other, Juvenal and Horace only excepted, among all the classics. I have endeavoured, because disencumbered from the fetters of poetry, faithfully to disclose his meaning in his own terms, and to shew him whole and entire*."

* Preface, p. 5.

But it is impossible to shew Lucretius *whole and entire* in a prose translation of any kind; and to exhibit him merely as a philosopher, and not as a poet, is to rob him of by far the greater portion of his merit,—of that which is peculiarly his own. For, whatever may be the value we affix to his doctrines and scientific inductions, the splendour of his imagery, and the harmony of his numbers are still infinitely more valuable. The translator's animadversions upon Creech are, unquestionably, well founded; yet the unfavourable opinion he has expressed of the English language, proves him to be but little acquainted with its extent or flexibility. Of itself, and without a recurrence to abstruse or technical terms, it possesses a vocabulary sufficiently varied and rich for all the common purposes of science and literature; yet the present day affords ample proofs that under the plastic hands of a judicious poet, the most recondite terms of the learned languages may be introduced into it with elegance, perspicuity, and melody; nor is it possible, perhaps, to instance any modern tongue with which they will so harmoniously amalgamate as our own.

In 1799, another effort was made to introduce THE NATURE OF THINGS in an English dress, by an anonymous author, who presented the first book alone as a specimen of his abilities for this purpose. The sample thus offered was in Iambic rhyme, and the rest of the poem was to have followed, as soon as the public had testified its approbation of the attempt. Without obtrusively depreciating the talents of a contemporary writer, it is sufficient to observe, that nothing farther of this version has been heard of; that the decision of the public was unfavourable; and that the author appears, in consequence, to have submitted, with suitable modesty, to the tribunal to which he appealed.

It results then, from this general survey, that no translation of THE NATURE OF THINGS has hitherto been presented to the public

by any means worthy, either of our own language, or of the intrinsic merits of the original.

To remedy this defect in English literature, is the object of the present attempt; an object, unquestionably, accompanied with difficulties, and difficulties which no effort has yet been able to surmount. I shall not, however, attempt to aggravate them, by disingenuously depreciating the powers of the language in which I write, or by affecting to discover a general obscurity in he original, which, to those who have closely studied its style and design, by no means exists.

Contrary to the example afforded by my predecessors, I have preferred blank verse to rhyme; not, however, from any dread of superior labour, but from a persuasion that, in mixed subjects of description and scientific precept, it possesses a decisive advantage over the couplet. It bends more readily to the topics introduced, it exhibits more dignity from its unshackled freedom, and displays more harmony from its greater variety of cadence. I have also attempted, what ought, indeed, to be the attempt of every translator, to give the manner, as well as the matter, of the original, to catch its characteristic style, and delineate its turns of expression.

The translation is accompanied with a perpetual commentary, in the form of subjoined notes, and a correct copy of the Latin text. With respect to the propriety or advantage of the latter, I was for some time doubtful. Mr. Wakefield was the first who proposed it to me; the plan was afterwards strenuously advised by many other literary friends of the first eminence, and I at length resolved to adopt it. In the choice of an edition, I found no difficulty: the intrinsic excellence, and pre-eminence of Mr. Wakefield's own, precluding all hesi-

tation upon the subject. I have at present, however, a motive for reprinting this edition, of which, I could not, at first, be aware; for almost all its copies were unfortunately consumed by the fire that, about two years ago, destroyed Mr. Hamilton's Printing-offices. To this edition, nevertheless, I have not, in every instance, adhered in my translation; on some few occasions preferring the lection of prior expositors, and in two or three cases suggesting emendations of my own: yet, not chusing to break in upon the integrity of Mr. Wakefield's text, I have merely pointed out, and defended, such variations in the commentary.

This commentary is composed of notes of different descriptions, which will, in general, be found equally original in their design and materials. It consists of parallel passages, or obvious imitations of Lucretius by other poets, whether Latin, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Portugueze, or English; together with original passages from Greek writers, to which our poet has himself occasionally referred, or from which he has manifestly borrowed. It consists, likewise, of casual observations on the different versions of Lucretius in our own, as well as foreign languages; and comparisons of the doctrines elucidated or animadverted upon in the course of the poem, with others of a similar tendency, which have been advanced or maintained by more modern philosophers. As I chiefly design this publication for the use of the English reader, I have, moreover, been punctilious in subfixing translations of all the passages from foreign writers, whose works I have found it necessary to quote. In cases where we have already adequate translations of such works in our own language, I have readily availed myself of such assistance: but in all other instances, as also where the version in common use is not sufficiently close to the original author to answer the purpose of the quotation, I have taken the liberty of giving a version myself. This, as will be

obvious, has largely augmented my labours, but it was a trouble that seemed imperiously demanded.

In attentively perusing the poem before us, it is impossible to avoid noticing the striking resemblance which exists between many of its most beautiful passages, and various parts of the poetic books of the Scriptures: and the Abbé de St. Pierre, as well as several other Continental writers, have hence conceived Lucretius to have been acquainted with them. The idea, it must be confessed, is but little more than a conjecture, but it is a conjecture which may easily be defended. Virgil, who though considerably younger than Lucretius, was contemporary with him, and attained his majority on the very day of our poet's decease, was indisputably acquainted with the prophecies of Isaiah; and Longinus, who flourished during the reign of Aurelian, quotes from the Mosaic writings by name. It is not difficult to account for such an acquaintance; for different books of the Bible, and especially those of the Pentateuch, appear to have been translated into Greek by the Jews themselves, at least three centuries anterior to the Christian æra, for the use of their brethren, who, at that time, were settled in Egypt, and other Grecian dependencies, and, residing among the Greeks, had adopted the Greek language. The Septuagint itself, moreover, was composed and published about the same period, by the express desire, and under the express patronage of Ptolemy Philadelphus; who, convinced of the importance and excellence of the Hebrew Scriptures, was desirous of diffusing a knowledge of them among the various classes of men of letters who, at his own invitation, had now thronged to Alexandria from every quarter. Theocritus was at this time among the number, and largely partook of the liberality of the Egyptian monarch; and Sanctius seems fairly to have established it, that the labours of the Grecian idyllist are deeply imbued with the spirit, and evince

manifest imitations of the language of the Song of Songs. Dr. Hodgson has, indeed, ascended very considerably higher, and even challenges Anacreon with having copied, in a variety of instances, from this inimitable relic of the sacred poetry of Solomon. This accusation may, perhaps, be doubtful; but it would be easy to prove, if the discussion were necessary in the present place, that, during the dynasty of the Ptolemies, not only the Muses of Aonia were indebted to the Muse of Sion, but that the eclectic philosophy, which first raised its monster head within the same period, incorporated many of the wildest traditions of the Jewish rabbis into its chaotic hypothesis. The literary connection which subsisted between Rome and Alexandria is well known; and it is not to be supposed that writings, which appear to have been so highly prized in the one city, would be received with total indifference in the other.

Be this, however, as it may; be the parallelisms I advert to, designed, or accidental, I trust I shall rather be applauded than condemned, for thus giving a loose to the habitual inclination of my heart. Grotius, Schultens, Lowth, and Sir William Jones, have set me the example; and, while treading in the steps of such illustrious scholars, I need not be afraid of public censure. Like them, I wish to prove that the sacred pages are as alluring by their language, as they are important in their doctrines; and that, whatever be the boast of Greece and Rome with respect to poetic attainments, they are often equalled, and occasionally surpassed by the former. The man who, professing the Christian religion, is acquainted with the ancient Classics, ought, at the same time, to be acquainted with biblical criticism; he has, otherwise, neglected his truest interest, and lived but for little purpose in the world. I delight in profane literature, but still more do I delight in my Bible: they are lamps, that afford a mutual assistance to each other. In point of importance, however,

I pretend not that they admit of comparison; and could it once be demonstrated, that the pursuits are inconsistent with each other, I would shut up Lucretius for ever, and rejoice in the conflagration of the Alexandrian library. Having thus occasionally extended my researches and resemblances to the Hebrew, the reader must excuse me, if, from a love of Asiatic poetry, I sometimes lead him into the sister languages of Arabia and Persia: yet, I trust, he will seldom have to repent of his journey, or return without an adequate recompense for its distance and fatigue.

To the general work, I have prefixed a biography of our poet. Those, I have hitherto met with, are little more than dry catalogues of dates and names, uninteresting in narrative, barren in facts, and questionable in chronology. I have pursued a different plan, have presented Lucretius, as far as I have been able, in the circle of his connexions, delineated him from his own writings, analysed the doctrines he professed, and defended him from the attacks of malevolence and ignorance. In a subjoined Appendix, I have given a comparative statement of the rival systems of philosophy that flourished in his own æra: have followed them, in their ebbs and flows, through succeeding generations, and identified their connexion with various theories of the present day. At the end of the work is added a copious, and, I trust, a useful Index.

I have thus put the reader into possession of his bill of fare, and may perhaps be allowed to hope, without vanity, that he will not be dissatisfied with the entertainment provided for him. "A good book," says an elegant writer of our own times, "is a creation; a good translation, a resurrection *." In the present instance, the creation is indisputable, the resurrection remains yet to be proved.

* Marquis de Boufflers. See his Discourse on Literature, delivered in the Academy of Sciences and Polite Arts at Berlin, Aug. 9, 1798.

THE

# LIFE

OF

# *LUCRETIUS.*

CONCERNING this inimitable poet, and most excellent philosopher. History presents us but with few authentic documents: and hence there are many circumstances of his life upon which writers have not been able to agree. For this dearth of materials, it is not difficult to account. Lucretius lived and died in a period in which the eye of every citizen was directed to public concerns; when the Roman empire was distracted by the ambition of aspiring demagogues, and the jealousies of contending factions: and when the party that triumphed in the morning was often completely defeated by night. Added to which, the life of Lucretius was spent in the shades of philosophy and quiet: a situation, undoubtedly, best calculated for the improvement of the heart, and the cultivation of philosophy or the muses, yet little checquered with those lights and shades, with that perpetual recurrence of incident, and contrast of success and misfortune, which are often to be met with in the lives of the more active; and which importunately call for the pen of the biographer.

while they afford him abundant materials for his narrative. From the records that yet remain, however, and the most plausible conjectures of his editors and annotators, I am enabled to present the reader with the following pages.

Titus Lucretius Carus was born at Rome, in the second year of the 171st Olympiad *, the 658th of the city, and the 90th anterior to the Christian æra, during the consulate of Licinius Crassus, and Quintus Mutius Scævola; being one year younger than Cæsar, and nine than Cicero. His name imports, that he was a descendant, and he is generally admitted to have been so, from one of the most ancient and illustrious families of the commonwealth; whose collateral branches had successively been elected to the highest offices in the state, and had often evinced the most distinguished abilities in their respective characters of consuls, tribunes, and prætors. From which of these

* I have followed the Chronicle of Eusebius, in fixing the dates both of the birth and death of Lucretius; for they so well correspond with the few political facts which are incidentally connected with his life as to carry along with them a strong internal proof of precision and veracity. These dates, however, have been disputed by a variety of biographic critics; and, almost every one of them having offered a different ground for his dissent, no man, perhaps, has ever had so many periods fixed, either for his nativity or decease. Lambinus asserts, that, upon the calculation of Eusebius, he must have been born under the consulate of Domitius Ænobarbus and Caius Cassius Longinus; but this would be to fix his birth in the first, instead of in the *second* year of the 171st Olympiad, and of course in the 657th, instead of the 658th year of the city. Creech, on the contrary, supposes him to have been born a year later, instead of a year sooner than Eusebius has computed. Peter Criniti, a Florentine writer, declares that he was older, and commonly allowed to be older, than Cicero, Terence, or Varro. De Poet. Lat. l. ii. Des Coutures, in the life of Lucretius, prefixed to his French version, brings him into the world not less than *twelve* years earlier than Cicero; and he is countenanced by Giffanius, and Pareus, the editor of the Dauphin edition. Even Gassendi, whose accuracy is seldom to be impeached, has, upon this point, made a most extraordinary mistake; and, confounding the day of his decease with that of his birth, asserts that, according to the Chronicle of Eusebius, Lucretius *died* in the 171st Olympiad, at the age of forty-three; and then, reasoning from the very error into which he had been betrayed, proceeds to contend that he must have been even older than Zeno, the preceptor at Athens, of Cicero, Atticus, Memmius, and our poet himself. De Vita Epic. ii. 6. It is either from a blind copy, or a similar misapprehension, that our own countryman, P. Blount, assigns him an equal degree of antiquity, and contends that he was born about the year of the city 620; consequently, not less than twenty-seven years anterior to the undisputed nativity of Cicero.

branches, however, our poet immediately derived his descent, we have no satisfactory document to inform us: but his prænomen of Titus naturally refers us to the direct line of that warm and excellent patriot, the celebrated Titus, son of Spurius Lucretius, memorable from his election to the office of inter-rex, on the abolition of the Roman monarchy, and brother of the chaste and virtuous Lucretia, who slew herself upon the violation of her person by Tarquin the sixth, and hereby produced the expulsion of the Tarquin family from the Roman throne.

It was upon this expulsion of the Tarquins, that Spurius Lucretius was unanimously chosen inter-rex, or king for the time being, till the meditated change in the constitution was completed, and the people had decided on the two citizens best qualified to support the new dignity of consuls. On this decision, little debate seems to have been necessary, and Junius Brutus, and Tarquinius Collatinus, the widowed husband of Lucretia, were unanimously inducted into the consular office. Upon the death of Brutus, who fell a short time afterwards, fighting gloriously for his country, against the combined forces which the Tarquins had mustered up with a vain hope of regaining possession of the Roman throne, Spurius Lucretius was elected consul in his stead *. Collatinus had retired from public service to the tranquillity of a rural life, and the celebrated Valerius, afterwards surnamed Poplicola, divided the consulate with him. Spurius Lucretius, however, enjoyed this additional proof of public estimation and gratitude but for a very short period. He died only a few days after his election to the chief magistracy: and Titus Lucretius, his son, from whom it appears probable our poet immediately descended, was unanimously appointed in his stead. The consulate was a dignity which Titus Lucretius enjoyed repeatedly; and he had always the

* Cic. de Fin. lib. ii.

additional dignity of possessing Valerius Poplicola for his colleague, the most able general, as well as the most consummate politician of his age. In the assault of Porsenna upon the Roman bridge, in favour of the Tarquins, and which immortalized the gallant Horatius Cocles, Titus Lucretius commanded the left wing of the Roman army; but was under the necessity of retiring from the field of battle, in consequence of a dangerous wound, before Cocles had signalized himself by his desperate resistance. He was likewise consul, and joint commander in chief with Poplicola when, in the year of Rome 247, the Sabines were completely defeated in their first attack upon the Roman state *, after it had assumed the form of a republic.

Though it seems to be uniformly admitted that this is the family, and probably the branch of that family, from which our poet sprang, history affords us not a single glimpse of information as to the prænomen, or profession of his father: the rank he maintained in the republic, or the patrimonial property he was possessed of. Cicero incidentally enumerates three citizens of the name of Lucretius, who were contemporaries with Carus, and probably connected by the consanguinity of brothers, or cousins; Marcus Lucretius, an acquaintance both of the Roman orator and of Caius Verres †, Quintus Lucretius Vispillio, and Lucretius Aphilia, both of whom he has introduced into his book of Celebrated Orators, and whose talents he has discriminated by representing the former as deeply skilled in the law, and admirable as a chamber counsel, and the latter as possest of abilities better adapted for popular harangues than for legal opinions ‡. He likewise speaks of a Quintus Lucretius, who fled from Sulmo, the birth-place of Ovid, upon the approach of Marc Antony §, and who appears to have been

* Plut. in Poplic. † In Verr. lib. i.

‡ Erat in privatis causis Q. Lucretius Vispillo, et acutus, et jurisperitus: nam Aphilia (in other copies Afilia, Ofella, Ofilius), aptior concionibus, quam judiciis. § Ad Attic. lib. viii.

a friend of his own, and his brother Quintus. But it is most probable, that the Quintus Lucretius here mentioned, is the same person as Lucretius Vispillio, and who, moreover, according to Cæsar, was of senatorial dignity, and that Cicero has only in this place incidentally omitted his surname.

Lucretius Offella, who is highly celebrated in history for his military exploits, and more especially for his able conduct at the siege of Præneſte, must have been many years older than our philosopher, and seems to have been rather an uncle, than a relation of any other kind. He fell a sacrifice, in the eighteenth year of the age of Lucretius Carus, to the infamous and arbitrary power of Sylla, who was then perpetual dictator. Offella, presuming on the favour of the people, whom he knew to be generally attached to him, offered himself for the consulate: Sylla was determined he should not succeed, but, at the same time, fearful of the issue of a fair competition, he procured him to be suddenly murdered by a centurion in the very centre of the comitia. The citizens were highly enraged, but their fury was now become idle.

Besides these who were contemporaries of Titus Lucretius, if we ascend about fifty or sixty years anterior to his birth, we meet with three of the same family occupying simultaneously some of the most important offices of the commonwealth: Caius, who, during the war with Perses king of Macedonia, in conjunction with Matienus, was elected naval duumvir *, or lord high admiral, and attacked, with singular success, a variety of fortified posts on the shores of Thessaly, and who was afterwards elected prætor †, for the services he rendered his country; and Spurius ‡, and Marcus, the brother of Caius, who for many years successively were also either prætors § or tribunes ‖. It muſt be con-

* Liv. lib. xl. cap. 26. † Id. xlii. 56. ‡ Id. xlii. 18. § Id. cap. 28. ‖ Id. cap. 19.

fessed, however, that but little real dignity can attach to our philosophic poet from the former of these ancestors: for he was accused before the senate, and at the forum, of having been guilty of the basest misconduct and rapacity during his different prætorships; of having made slaves of many families under the immediate protection of the Roman republic; of having exacted immense contributions for his private use; and of having even decorated his sumptuous villa at Antium with paintings plundered from the temple of Æsculapius at Abdera*. Charges of this kind, indeed, were but too frequently exhibited against the prætors of almost every province: like many adventurers to distant colonies in the present day, they too often solicited these high offices for the sole purpose of amassing immense fortunes in a short period of time; and when once they had obtained their appointments, moral rectitude, and the honour of their country, were completely discarded, and every engine was set to work that could contribute to their immediate object in view. Nothing, therefore, could be more wretched than the situation of a province dependant upon the Roman power: it had the liberty of complaining by ambassadors extraordinary, it must be confest; nor was the government generally indifferent to the accusations alleged; for the obnoxious viceroy was commonly removed, but he was, at the same time, as commonly succeeded by one as iniquitous as himself. With regard to Caius Lucretius, however, he was not only recalled, and severely reprimanded, but most heavily fined for his rapacity†.

Yet nothing of this kind of guilt appears to have sullied the character of the father of Lucretius Carus. The silence of history respecting him, completely proves that he never possessed any office of great political distinction or dignity: and it is hence highly probable that, like his son, he preferred a life of retirement and study to the pomp

* Liv. cap. 43. † Id.

and pageantry of public occupations. From the juvenile friendships of our poet, and the liberal education bestowed upon him, there can be no doubt, however, of his having lived in a state of considerable respectability and affluence.

The period in which Titus Lucretius was born was highly favourable to philosophy; the Romans having now begun to discover an enthusiasm for Grecian literature, and to cultivate a polite and classical taste with regard to their own tongue. The disputes of Marius and Sylla had not yet lighted up the torch of civil war throughout the republic: the elegant writings of Polybius, whom Scipio Æmilianus had not long before attached to the Roman interest, and induced to desert Greece for the metropolis of this aspiring people, were in the hands of every one: and, charmed with the style of the Grecian historian, as well as emulous of his literary fame, Rutilius Rufus, the consul, had lately published, in Greek, a history of his own country.

The study of the Grecian language had indeed become fashionable from another cause; for the Achæan hostages, who were sent to Rome, upon the reduction of their own country, towards the close of the preceding century, and whose number was not less than a thousand, were, for the most part, men of taste, and elegant accomplishments, while many of them were scholars of profound and eminent erudition. The whole city became enamoured of the various acquisitions of its new visitants; and in matters of polite literature, the conquerors soon yielded to the conquered. Hence, schools for the study and exercise of rhetoric and eloquence, superintended by native Greeks, became in a short time so frequent, that scarcely a Roman youth * was to be

* Vide Sueton de Clar. Rhet. i. who thus appeals to the words of Athæneus, which unquestionably relate to the rhetoricians of Greece: Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ τὰ πρῶτα ἐξεβλήθησαν τοὺς φιλοσόφους τοὺς παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις, ὡς διαφθείροντας τοὺς νέους. Deipnosoph. l. xiii.

found, who would engage in any other avocation; and the whole body of philosophers and rhetoricians were expelled by a decree of the senate, during the consulship of Fannius Strabo, and Valerius Messala, in the year of the city 592. A general taste for Grecian literature, nevertheless, still continued to predominate; and it was considerably augmented towards the beginning of the seventh century of the Roman æra, by a comparison between the true classical taste which had been uniformly evinced by these unfortunate scholars, and the tribe of Latin sophists and declaimers, who, in consequence of their exile, sprang up, and began to usurp their place: men who were bloated with conceit, instead of being inspired by wisdom, and who substituted the mere tinsel of verbiage for the sterling gold of argument and fair induction *. With this foppery of learning, also, the Roman government soon became disgusted, and in 661, during the censorship of Crassus, the Latin declaimers shared the fate of the Greek rhetoricians, and were formally banished from Rome †. In their own language, therefore, we meet with but few successful specimens of prosaic eloquence down to this period; yet Cato the censor, Lælius, and Scipio, were orators of no inconsiderable powers, and eminently as well as deservedly esteemed in their day. In poetry, however, the republic had already a right to boast of its productions: for Andronicus, Nævius, and Ennius, had long delighted their countrymen with their dramatic as well as their epic labours: Pacuvius, and Accius, Plautus, Cæcilius, and Afranius, had improved upon the models thus

* The first of these Latin declaimers was Plotius Gallus, who erected his school when Cicero was a boy; and as all Rome flocked to hear him, Cicero was stung with disappointment, because his wiser friends prohibited him from being of the number. He thus relates the transaction in his treatise to Marcus Titinius, a treatise now lost, but the present passage from which, is preserved by Suetonius, and is as follows: Equidem memoriâ teneo, pueris nobis, primum Latine docere cœpisse Lucium Plotium quemdam: ad quem quum fieret concursus, quod studiosissimus quisque apud eum exerceretur, dolebam mihi idem non licere. Continebar, autem, doctissimorum hominum auctoritate; qui existimabant, Græcis exercitationibus ali melius ingenia posse. De Clar. Rhet. ii.

† Aul. Gell. et Sueton. l. c.

offered them in the former department, and Terence had just carried it to its utmost point of perfection.

Public museums, libraries, and collections of valuable curiosities from Greece, Syracuse, Spain, and other parts of the world, were, at this period, also becoming frequent and fashionable. Italy was never more emptied of its elegancies and ornaments by Bonaparte, than Syracuse was by Marcellus, when stratagem and treachery at length gave him an admission into this city. In the forcible words of Livy, "he left nothing to the wretched inhabitants but their walls and houses *." Spain and Africa were in the same manner ransacked by the elder Scipio; Macedon and Lacedæmon by Flaminius; Carthage by Scipio Africanus, and Corinth by Mummius. But the most important library and museum, which at this period attracted the attention of the Romans, and excited a taste for classical study and the fine arts, were established under the patronage and superintendence of the illustrious L. Æmilius Paulus, and consisted of an immense number of volumes, statues, and paintings, which he had imported from Epirus, upon the general plunder and destruction of that unfortunate country, in consequence of its adherence to Perses of Macedon, and which had been accumulating ever since the reign of Alexander the Great. This primitive library was founded about fifty years prior to the birth of Lucretius; it was continually augmented by the accession of other books, presented by men of letters or warriors, into whose hands they occasionally fell, as a part of the public spoil; but was more indebted to Lucullus, who had studied philosophy under Antiochus the Ascalonite, than to any one else, and who, about the eighteenth year of our poet's age, added to it the whole collection of volumes he had seized from Mithridates, upon his conquest of Pontus. Yet the transplantation into the Roman capital, of the extensive and invaluable

* Nihil præter mœnia et tecta Syracusanis relictum, l. xxvi. 30.

libraries of Aristotle and Theophrastus, contributed perhaps, more than every other circumstance, to inflame the Roman people with a love of Grecian literature. This was effected by the fortunate conquests of Sylla, and anteceded the public present of Lucullus, who, from being a menial dependent upon, became a legate of the former, by about fifteen years, consequently during the infancy of Lucretius. These unrivalled libraries were the property of Apellicon of Teia, who had accumulated an immense collection of books of intrinsic value, at an incredible expence. Apellicon does not appear to have been by any means a scholar; but he was a man of prodigious wealth; and, as it sometimes occurs in the present day, notwithstanding his ignorance of literature, a library was his hobby-horse, and the greater part of his rental was expended in augmenting it. For this purpose, he ransacked all the public and private collections of books in Asia; he surpassed, in many instances, the offers even of the emperors Eumenes and Mithridates, for volumes that were become scarce as well as valuable; and where he had not an opportunity of purchasing, he frequently, by considerable presents, tempted the librarians to steal for him. During the first war, however, between Mithridates king of Pontus and the Roman republic, in which Sylla eventually triumphed, and acquired a high degree of personal glory, the city of Athens had unfortunately united itself with the Asiatic prince: and hence, at the conclusion of the war, was left totally at the mercy of the Roman conqueror. Sylla appears to have thrown a most wishful eye upon every thing of intrinsic value that lay within his reach:—and, having sacrilegiously invaded the groves of Academus and the Lyceum, the library of Apellicon was one of the next objects that captivated his attention. He was determined to add it to his other treasures; but force was now become unnecessary; for, at this very moment, the book-worm Apellicon died, and he met with no resistance from his relations *.

* Plut. in Sylla, Strab. l. xiii.

Sylla immediately transported this invaluable acquisition to his own palace at Rome, and the eye of the public was uniformly directed to its contents. The original manuscripts of Aristotle were found to be much injured: Apellicon had purchased them of Nileus of Scepsis, during whose possession of them they had been for a long time buried under ground, to prevent their falling into the hands of Eumenes king of Pergamus, in his attack upon this city. They had, hence, become in many places mouldy and moth-eaten, and the chasms which were hereby introduced into the text, it was found difficult to fill up. But they had experienced even a greater misfortune still, by the clumsy attempts of Apellicon himself to restore these ruined passages: for the mistakes into which he had fallen had added obscurity to obscurity. Sylla pursued a better plan, and, well knowing that he was totally incompetent to the undertaking himself, employed first of all Tyrannio, a celebrated grammarian and critic from Pontus, and afterwards, the still more celebrated Andronicus Rhodius, to make a complete revision of these invaluable writings, and to supply their defects from the best collateral copies *.

But the literature of Greece was, nevertheless, best to be acquired in Greece itself; and the Romans, though they transplanted books, could not transplant the general taste and spirit that produced them. Athens, although considerably shorn of the glory of her original constitution, and dependant upon Rome for protection, had still to boast of her schools, her scholars, and her libraries. Every scene, every edifice, every conversation was a living lecture of taste and elegance. Here was the venerable grove, in which Plato had unfolded his sublime mysteries to enraptured multitudes: here the awful lyceum, in which Aristotle had anatomised the springs of human intellect and ac-

* Pancirol. lib. i.

tion: here the porch of Zeno, still erect and stately as its founder: and here, the learned shades and winding walks, in which Epicurus had delineated the origin and NATURE OF THINGS, and inculcated tranquillity and temperance: and here too was the vast and magnificent library that Pisistratus first established, and endowed for the gratuitous use of his countrymen. Here Homer sung, and Apelles painted: here Sophocles had drawn tears of tenderness, and Demosthenes fired the soul to deeds of heroism and patriotic revenge. The monuments of every thing great or glorious, dignified or refined, virtuous or worthy, were still existing at Athens: and she had still philosophers to boast of, who were capable of elucidating the erudition that blazed forth more conspicuously in her earlier ages of independence.

To this celebrated city, therefore, this theatre of universal learning, Lucretius, with a great number of Roman youths of his own age, was sent for education. The system of philosophy determined upon for his pursuit, was that of Epicurus: and the Epicurean school, an edifice erected and endowed by this profound and indefatigable sage himself*, was, at the present period, superintended by Phædrus and Zeno. Till this æra, however, the school of Epicurus had been gradually declining; and, unsupported by public patronage, the neat, but modest mansion which had not been sufficiently provided for by its

* The estate consisted of a convenient house and most pleasant garden, in the walks and shades of which Epicurus delivered his instructions to crowded and delighted audiences: the institution was hence denominated "The School of the Garden," as that of Plato was the Academy, that of Aristotle the Lyceum, that of Zeno the Porch, and that of Antisthenes the Cynosargum. The purchase-money paid for it was eighty minæ, which, as the mina may be computed at about five pounds sterling in the present day, makes its sterling value about four hundred pounds. Epicurus entrusted it by his will, which has been preserved by Diogenes Laertius, and is a curious and valuable document, to Hermachus of Mitylene, a beloved and confidential disciple, whom he hereby nominated his successor, and expressly charged with the execution of his different bequests. He provided for its perpetuity, upon the death of Hermachus, and left it enriched with an extensive library, and endowed with a moderate revenue from another estate he possessed at Mitylene: the house upon which he gave also to Hermachus as his place of residence.

philosophic founder, against such a casualty, was falling into a state of dilapidation. But it was not suffered to remain in this humiliating situation long; for it was completely repaired, and even additionally ornamented, by the private munificence of Lucius Memmius, a Roman citizen of high rank and unswerving virtue; between whose family and that of Lucretius the most intimate friendship had subsisted for several centuries: and who were continually assisting each other, as we learn from Livy *, in obtaining elections either to the consulate, the tribuneship, or some provincial prefecture. The son of Lucius Memmius was a fellow-student with young Carus; and it is probable, that even their fathers had preceded them in the same college, and that its restoration was determined upon from the influence of local attachment and juvenile veneration.

In consequence of this well-timed and judicious patronage, the Epicurean school experienced a sudden and brilliant revival; for it is impossible to reflect on the names of the students, whom we know, from the writings of Cicero, to have been contemporary, at the period we are speaking of, without being astonished at the constellation of real learning and genius they exhibited in the aggregate: Cicero himself, and his two brothers, Lucius and Quintus, the latter of whom was a poet, and as signally distinguished in the profession of arms, as Marcus in that of eloquence; Titus Pomponius, from his critical knowledge of the Greek tongue, surnamed Atticus, but who derives this higher praise from Cornelius Nepos, that "he never deviated from the truth, nor would associate with any one who had done so;" our own poet Lucretius Carus, his family and bosom-friend Caius Memmius Gemellus, of whose talents and learning the writings of Cicero offer abundant proofs, and to whom he afterwards paid the honour of dedicating his "NATURE OF THINGS:" Lucretius Vespilio,

* Lib. xlii, xliii.

his relation, whom Cicero, as I have already remarked, has enumerated among the orators of his day; Marcus Junius Brutus, Caius Cassius, and Caius Velleius, each of whom immortalized himself by preferring the freedom of his country to the friendship of Cæsar; and hence engaged in the patriotic conspiracy which only terminated with their lives: these we know to have been contemporary students; and they may fairly be adduced as a specimen of the very flourishing state of the Epicurean school at this period *.

The friendships contracted in youth are the most durable, for they are the most honest and disinterested; and it should be remarked to the praise of these illustrious young men, that they never deserted each other in future life; that the warmth of their juvenile attachments increased, rather than diminished, with their years; and that in the midst of the misfortunes to which almost every one of them was exposed in his turn, each was sure of receiving the utmost commiseration and assistance from the rest. This too should be observed, in praise of the principles they had imbibed with their studies, and of the

* Velleius Paterculus gives us the following catalogue of eminent and accomplished scholars who flourished in the present age: "Vidit," says he, "Ciceronem, Senemque Crassum, Catonem, Sulpitium, moxque Brutum, Calidium, Calvum, Cœlium, et proximum Ciceroni Cæsarem, eorumque velut alumnos Corvinum, ac Pollionem Asinium, æmulumque Thucydidis Sallustium, auctoresque carminum Varronem et Lucretium, neque ullo in suscepti operis sui carmine minorem Catullum," lib. ii. To these he might have added Quintus Cicero, who was both a poet and a soldier; Varro Atacinus, who translated into Latin the Argonautics of Apollonius Rhodius, and wrote an heroic poem, "de Bello Sequanico," besides Satires, Elegies, and Epigrams, some of which appear to have been serviceable to Virgil; Rabirius, an epic poet, a philosopher, a philologer, and a critic, esteemed the most learned man of his age, and who composed not less than 490 books or treatises on different subjects, enumerated by Cicero or Aulus Gellius; Quintus Hortensius, the celebrated orator, who was consul in 684; M. Marcellus, of equal merit and talents, who was consul in 702, and whose son, Caius Marcellus, married Octavia, sister to Augustus; Calpurnius Piso, consul in 605; Quintus Lutatius Catulus, the poet and historian, consul, also, in 651; and Atteius, one of the most distinguished characters of his age, who was likewise consul in 713. In the earlier period of his life he was master to Sallust, and Asinius Pollio, to the latter of whom Virgil dedicated his fourth eclogue, and who recommended Atteius to Mæcenas. We have here, therefore, a galaxy of talents and learning, which neither the Augustan, nor any other age in the whole history of the Roman republic, can presume to rival.

tutors who had superintended them. Of these worthy colleagues, indeed, Cicero often speaks in terms of high esteem and veneration, although shortly after his return to Rome he abjured the doctrines of Epicurus, into which he had been so sedulously initiated at Athens. Both Zeno and Phædrus he applauds, for their indefatigable attention to the duties of their office*: but, of the amiable disposition of the latter, he bears the most ample testimony, in more than one of his epistles. "We, formerly," says he, in a letter to Caius Memmius, "when we were boys, knew him as a profound philosopher; but we still recollect him as a most kind and worthy man, ever solicitous about our improvement †."

Cicero, I have said, upon his return to Rome, abjured the philosophic doctrines of Epicurus, which he had so warmly embraced in his youth: the sublimity of Plato's mysteries offered a higher gratification, and seduced him from his first faith. But, in a subsequent visit to Athens, for the benefit of his health, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, he tells us, that both himself and Pomponius Atticus, who accompanied him, were frequent attendants upon their old tutors ‡. Except Cicero, however, it does not appear, that any of the fellow-students of Lucretius were enticed, or at least altogether enticed, from the philosophic principles of their juvenile days. With Atticus, and his own brothers, the Roman orator often rallies in his epistles, and with the most elegant and good-humoured wit, for their inflexible adherence to their earlier opinions, notwithstanding his attempts to convert them to his new creed. Cassius, Atticus, Memmius, and

* De Fin. Bon. et Mal. lib. i. p. 1086. Gronov. † Epist. lib. xiii.

‡ Lib. i. de Fin. In a still later period of his life, Cicero seems once more to have fluctuated, though he never altogether deserted the principles of the academy: when his son, however, was old enough to be sent to Athens, he committed him to the care of Cratippus, a teacher of the *Peripatetic* philosophy.

Lucretius, it is well known, maintained, through the whole of their lives, the entire system they had imbibed at Athens: and, when Brutus was alarmed by the appearance of a ghost, while sitting alone in his tent at midnight, and revolving in his own mind the meditated attack upon Anthony and Octavius, Cassius quickly dispelled his apprehensions, by recalling to him the opinion of Epicurus, upon phantoms of this description; which, like the images that appear to us in our dreams, he assured him were nothing more than mere films, or effluences ejected from surrounding objects, and only presented to the mind in a state of extreme quietude and abstraction *.

It is not to be supposed, that a body of youths, thus richly endowed by nature, and instructed by education, would remain deaf to the voice of ambition, and evince no desire of sharing in those political honours and emoluments, which the situation of the commonwealth afforded them, at this period, so fair a chance of attaining. For the most part, they plunged deeply into the stream; many of them indeed far beyond their depth,—yet to all it proved a boisterous current, and they were frequently in danger of being overwhelmed. Ambition and self-interest appear, on particular occasions, to have seduced several of them from the path of political rectitude and integrity; but, upon the whole, they may be uniformly regarded as the brightest ornaments of their country, and the firmest pillars of her republican constitution. They were a band not easily to be broken; and the instances are but few, in which they separated from each other, and appeared in opposite parties. Memmius was, on more

* Plut. in Brut. See this doctrine elucidated by Lucretius, in b. iv. 33—41 of the ensuing poem. Brutus is stated, by some authors, to have imbibed the entire system of Stoicism; and there can be no doubt that he did so, with respect to its ethical doctrines. But on points of physics and metaphysics, the readiness with which he yielded to these arguments of Cassius, proves obviously, that he was not far from being still an Epicurean at his heart.

occasions than one, indebted to Cicero, Cicero to Atticus, Brutus to Cassius, and Cassius to Velleius.

Into these perversities of political life, however, Lucretius never entered. The high road to the first dignities of the state was open to himself, as well as to his friends; and from the illustrious antiquity of his family, his own mental endowments, and the support of his fellow-students, had ambition been his ruling passion, he could have gratified it to satiety. In this case, from the glowing patriotism, and inextinguishable love of liberty, which are so conspicuous in his poem, and which it was not in the power of the deepest retirement to eradicate, there can be no doubt, that he would have united with Brutus in the conspiracy against Cæsar: and it would have been highly gratifying to the virtuous heart, to have beheld, at a distance of more than four hundred years, the immediate descendants of the two families, who had stimulated the people to throw off the tyranny of the Tarquins, once more at the head of a plot concerted to rescue their country from the chains of a tyrant possessed of infinitely more artifice and address. But the life of Lucretius did not extend to this period, nor did his bosom pant for the possession of public honours and renown. He saw, in the history of his own family, abundant instances of the instability of that happiness which depends upon the caprice of the multitude; and how fatal to the preservation of virtue and serenity of mind, are those temptations, to which the candidate for political fame is perpetually exposed. These are evils which he not only saw but felt, for he repeatedly adverts to them, and dwells in the most impressive manner, upon their magnitude and fatality. Temperance and tranquillity, he had been taught in every lecture at Athens, were the only foundations of an unshaken felicity—and Epicurus had more attractions in his eye than the forum or the senate.

In the neighbourhood of Rome, therefore, he fixed his peaceful abode, and devoted himself altogether to the pure pleasures of philosophy and domestic life. His two most intimate friends appear to have been Cassius and Memmius. Cassius, like himself, was a strenuous supporter of the doctrines, as well as defender of the character of Epicurus; and Cicero has expressly noticed the continuance of his attachment to the Lucretii, even after our poet's decease. One of this family, in particular, he still denominates the bosom-friend of Cassius, and proves, that they were in the habit of maintaining a close and intimate correspondence when at a distance from each other *. To Memmius our poet dedicated the work that has immortalized him; and accompanied him to Bithynia, in conjunction with Catullus, and the celebrated grammarian Curtius Nicas, upon his appointment to the government of that province †. In an early period of life, he married a lady whose name was Lucilia, but with whose family we are not acquainted, though from such name, in conjunction with several other circumstances, it is no improbable conjecture, that she was a sister of Lucius Lucilius, who joined the confederacy against Cæsar, and, by personating Brutus in his unfortunate engagement with Marc Anthony, enabled him to escape from the hands of the victorious army. The friendship which, from having commenced in their boyish days, subsisted without interruption, or even diminution, between this extraordinary society of virtuous and accomplished youths, extended in many instances to their families and collateral connexions, and laid the foundation for a variety of intermarriages. It was hence, that Quintus Cicero married Pomponia, the sister of Pomponius Atticus; and Cassius, Julia, the sister of Marcus Brutus. Lucilius was the bosom-friend of Brutus and Cassius; and Cassius the bosom-friend of Lucretius; and it is thus highly probable, that the Lucilia, who was the wife of Lucretius, was a sister of the Lucilius in question.

* Attic. vii. 24, 25 † Sueton

In the retired and unmolested shades he had chosen, happy in his domestic connexions, occupied by the studies of philosophy, successfully cultivating the muses, and occasionally enlivened by the resort of his early and more ambitious friends, our poet proved how well he was entitled to the surname of CARUS, or the AMIABLE, and composed his unrivalled poem on the NATURE OF THINGS: a poem which was read with enthusiasm by the most learned of his own, as well as of the Augustan age that immediately succeeded, and which will perpetuate his name as long as language of any kind shall live to pronounce it.

The composition of this excellent work seems to have afforded him an uninterrupted source of pleasure; for there is scarcely a book which does not contain many passages testimonial of the delight it produced. Of future fame he was not unambitious,—but it was not the fame of the warrior, whose laurels are crimsoned with blood, or of the rapacious prætor, whose palace was too generally erected, and beautified with the spoils of the province he was appointed to defend. It was the pure and unsullied fame of the poet and the philosopher; of the sage, who glows with satisfaction at the thought of having laboured night and day for the benefit of his race; of the patriot, who weeps over the vices of his country, while he is anxious to instruct the public mind, and correct the public morals. Conscious of being actuated by these honourable motives, he more than once bursts forth into the following exclamation:

——the thirst of fame
Burns all my bosom, and through ev'ry nerve
Darts the proud love of letters and the muse.
I feel th' inspiring pow'r, and roam resolv'd
Through paths PIERIAN never trod before.
Sweet are the springing founts with nectar new,

Sweet the new flow'rs that bloom ; but sweeter still
Those flow'rs to pluck, and weave a roseat wreath
The muses yet to mortals ne'er have deign'd.
With joy the subject I pursue—and free
The captiv'd mind from superstition's yoke:
With joy th' obscure illume; in liquid verse
Graceful and clear, depicting all survey'd *.

It is by no means an easy point to ascertain the period in which this poem was written. From the evidence of its introductory address, it was at least commenced, when Memmius was in his zenith of political splendour and influence, and the republic was distracted with internal broils, and foreign wars. Taking this, therefore, as a postulate to compute from, I have no hesitation in referring it to about the year of the city 695. Caius Memmius, who had been prætor in 689, and appointed to the government of Bithynia in 691, had at this time returned from his prefecture; Clodius, by his intrigues, had acquired the control of the forum; and, by the connivance of both Pompey and Cæsar, had succeeded in obtaining a formal decree of banishment against Cicero: the Asiatic war against Mithridates, and his allies, was but just closed, and that with the Helvetii was in its midmost violence. Lucretius, at this period, must have been in his thirty-eighth year. It is some proof of the popular influence which was now possessed by Caius Memmius, that Cæsar, notwithstanding the glory he had already attained, and was still in the act of attaining by his martial exploits, found himself compelled to drop a public accusation, he had at one time determined to bring forwards against him. The origin of this dispute we know not; but there is little doubt of its having proceeded from the warmth, with which Memmius had espoused the cause of Cicero, and it hence becomes highly creditable to his virtue: through life there was the closest attachment between them, and

* Book I. v. 984, and Book IV. v. i.

the former, a short time anterior to his decease, adopted a young and particular friend of the latter as his heir. That this was the real ground of dispute, is rendered still more probable by the fact, that on the recal of Cicero to Rome, which was chiefly brought about by the interposition of Cæsar himself, the two disputants were not only reconciled, but, from that time, united in the support of each other's interest.

The difficulties with which Lucretius had to struggle, in the composition of his poem, were great and numerous; and we cannot wonder at his frequently feeling their embarassing effects, and occasionally alluding to them in his progress. The subject he had selected, though the noblest, was the most profound, as well as the most comprehensive, that can ever engage the attention of the human mind; nor is there any title by which it could be designated so pertinently as that selected by himself, THE NATURE OF THINGS. It embraces the whole scope of natural, metaphysical, and moral philosophy; and to execute it with any great degree of success, required a knowledge almost, if not altogether, universal.

The first difficulty Lucretius had to surmount, was produced by the Latin language itself. To philosophy it was a total stranger; and though rich and nervous with respect to subjects introduced into the senate, or at the forum, it displayed a dreadful poverty and imbecility in matters of metaphysical science. The only poets, indeed, of any kind, who had ever preceded him in hexameter verse, were Livius Andronicus, Ennius, and Nævius; and of these three, the second alone was worthy of any degree of notice; who, on this account, though he wrote after Andronicus *, has been justly regarded as the father of Ro-

* Horace, in speaking of Livius Andronicus, does not wish for the destruction of his poems, but is surprised that they should ever have been esteemed:

Non equidem insector, delendave carmina Livî
Esse reor, memini quæ plagosum mihi parvo

man poetry; and to whom Lucretius, with that native politeness and suavity of disposition, for which he was so eminently distinguished, pays a high compliment, and proves at the same time how far he was exalted above every low and invidious feeling *. But it does not appear from the teſtimony, either of Virgil, Ovid, or Statius, that the compositions of Ennius had ever enriched the Latin tongue. Virgil thus expresses himself, upon his merits as a writer:

He from the *mire* of Ennius gather'd gold †.

Nor widely different Ovid, who alludes to him under the following description:

Ennius in sense acute, but *rude in art* ‡.

While Statius, in the ensuing couplet, draws, perhaps, a fair comparison between Ennius and our own poet:

Here his *rude muse* let *barbarous Ennius* yield,
Here learn'd Lucretius drop his rapturous rage ||.

The subject, moreover, which Ennius had adopted for his poem, that, I mean, of the second Punic war, was not calculated to augment the language with many phrases that would have been useful to Lucretius, even if he had been more select in his terms, and more profuse of rhetorical imagery. He appears, however, to have been a man of an enlarged underſtanding, and deeply versed in the philosophy of the

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Orbilium dictare; sed emendata videri,
Pulchraque, et exactis minimum distantia, miror. Ep. II. i. 69.

I hate not Livy, nor would e'er destroy
Those lines Orbilius taught me when a boy;
But that such lines with numbers e'er could range,
Exact and polish'd, this I own is strange.

* Book I. 136. † Aurum ex Ennii stercore collegit. Cul.
‡ Ennius ingenio maximus, arte rudis. Trist.
|| Cedet musa rudis ferocis Enni,
Et docti furor arduus Lucreti. Silv.

Greeks. The doctrines he had imbibed were those of Pythagoras. He was highly beloved both by Cato and Scipio Africanus, who were his pupils; and the latter of whom, in gratitude for his poem on his own exploits, erected a statue to his memory.

Lucretius, therefore, might well assert, as he does in the passage just quoted, and with the strictest degree of veracity, that in writing this poem he was exploring his way

> Through paths Pierian never trod before.

He had, in consequence, to introduce doctrines and ideas into poetry, with which poetry was as yet totally unacquainted; and to bend and modify the language, in which he wrote, to a perspicuous conveyance of them. Of this difficulty he was fully sensible; and he thus openly expresses himself upon the subject, to his friend Caius Memmius:

> Yet not unknown to me how hard the task
> Such deep obscurities of GREECE t' unfold
> In LATIN numbers; to combine new terms,
> And strive with all our poverty of tongue.
> But such thy virtue, and the friendship pure
> My bosom bears, that arduous task I dare,
> And yield the sleepless night: in hope to cull
> Some happy phrase, some well selected verse,
> Meet for the subject; to dispel each shade,
> And bid the mystic doctrine hail the day *.

Lucretius, however, has not only occasionally introduced new and appropriate terms, but on particular occasions revived, or given a new sense to antiquated words, which ought never to have sunk into oblivion. Vocabularies, like all other things of human invention, are subject to dilapidations; and nothing, perhaps, requires a more delicate taste than to restore the falling edifice, so as to assimilate it to

* Book I. v. 153.

the fashion of the day, without destroying its genuine order of architecture; to introduce the hoary stranger into company with his juniors, and to obtain for him that attention to which, by his years, he is entitled. No poet has ever expressed himself upon this subject with more felicity than Horace, in a passage which I shall take the liberty of translating:

> Stamp'd is thy taste if, dextrous, thou discern
> For hackney'd terms some new unhackney'd turn.
> If themes abstruse, to modern numbers strange,
> Perplex thy pow'rs, assume an ampler range:
> Call back to life sounds obsolete and old,
> The cause demands it, and thou may'st be bold;
> Or the fresh stores the Grecian fount supplies,
> Bent but a little, frequent may suffice.
> These fearless take: for why should Rome concede
> A claim to bards, whom now we seldom read,
> Cecilius, Plautus, that the claſſic strain
> Of Virgil aſks, or Varius, but in vain?
> Why should myself not glean, if glean I may,
> In the same fields, unlimited as they,
> Where Ennius, Cato, cull'd unfading flow'rs,
> Trimm'd the new growth, and made th' exotics ours?
> Yet less approv'd it must be to purloin
> From foreign mints, than use a native coin.
> As falls the foliage with the falling year,
> Yet with the spring new foliage pants t' appear,
> So perish phrases—so a junior race
> Spring into birth and fill their parents' place.
> Man dies himself, and all that man can boaſt:
> E'en the vast bason o'er the Roman coast,
> Imperial plan! that bids our navy ride
> In conscious triumph, and defy the tide;
> E'en the broad plain that, late, a drear morass,
> Now springs productive o'er the wat'ry mass,
> Bears the stern plough-share, and to cities round
> Spreads its gay scene, with russet harvests crown'd;

E'en the canal, that erst our fields o'erflow'd
With useless ooze, till taught a happier road—
These all shall perish, as from man they thrive;
Nor shall the pomp, the grace of words survive.
Yet much that dies shall live, while many a term
Now most esteem'd, most durable and firm,
Shall sink forgot, if tyrant custom teach:
Whence draw we sole the rules, the rights of speech *.

No poet, perhaps, has more completely exemplified the true taste and solid judgment of such precepts, than Lucretius; for no poet has been more delicately or forcibly select, whether in the adoption of his words, or his idioms. Some degree of obscurity may, indeed, be discovered occasionally, but it is in every instance chargeable upon the subject,

* In verbis etiam tenuis cautusque serendis,
Dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum
Reddiderit junctura novum; si forte necesse est
Indiciis monstrare recentibus abdita rerum,
Fingere cinctutis non exaudita Cethegis
Continget: dabiturque licentia sumpta pudenter.
Et nova factaque nuper habebunt verba fidem, si
Græco fonte cadant, parce detorta. Quid autem
Cæcilio, Plautoque dabit Romanus, ademptum
Virgilio, Varioque? ego cur acquirere pauca
Si possum, invideor; cum lingua Catonis et Ennî
Sermonem patrium ditaverit, et nova rerum
Nomina protulerit? Licuit, semperque licebit
Signatum præsente notâ procudere nomen.
Ut silvæ foliis pronos mutantur in annos;
Prima cadunt: ita verborum vetus interit ætas,
Et juvenum ritu florent modo nata vigentque.
Debemur morti nos, nostraque; sive receptus
Terrâ Neptunus, classes Aquilonibus arcet,
Regis opus; sterilisve diu palus, aptaque remis,
Vicinas urbes alit, et grave sentit aratrum:
Seu cursum mutavit iniquum frugibus amnis,
Doctus iter melius: mortalia facta peribunt,
Nedum sermonum stet honos, et gratia vivax.
Multa renascentur, quæ jam cecidere; cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est, et jus, et norma loquendi. De Art. Poet. 46.

rather than upon the poet; for I hesitate not to assert, that throughout the whole it is impossible for order to be more luminous, for language to be more perspicacious, or for the greater part of the deductions introduced to be more consequent and legitimate. There are few prose writers upon mathematical and metaphysical subjects so felicitous in the conveyance of their ideas:—and, as to most of the translators and commentators upon the Latin text, I have often been compelled to turn to the original to discover what they were endeavouring to interpret. Added to which, the occasional digressions, in which the poet has indulged himself, flow freely, and to the point; and his episodes are altogether unrivalled. I am not surprised, therefore, at the enthusiasm which Quintus Cicero, who through life adhered to the system of Epicurus, evinced for this elaborate poem. It was his travelling companion amidst his wars; and, like Alexander, with respect to the Iliad, or, as is reported, Bonaparte, with respect to the poems of Ossian—he slept with it under his pillow, and feasted on it whenever he had leisure. Nor did he estimate its merits too highly: for Marcus Cicero himself, long after he had abjured the doctrines it is designed to elucidate, accedes, in one of his letters to his brother, to his own exalted opinion of it: "I agree with you," says he, "that this poem displays a large and luminous mind, and many masterly touches of the poetic art*." This, however, is not the only instance in which Marcus Cicero testified his high sense of Lucretius as a poet. We shall find, in the prosecution of this narrative, that we are indebted to him for its publication. And when, several years afterwards, Cytheris recited the Silenus of Virgil before a full audience, Cicero, who was present on the occasion, enraptured with its beautiful epitome of the Epicurean philosophy, burst suddenly into an extatic exclamation, that its author was "*a* SECOND *hope of mighty*

* Lucretii poemata, ut scribis, ita sunt multis luminibus ingenii; multa tamen artis. Ep. ad Quint. ii. 11.

*Rome**," esteeming Lucretius the first: as if he had said, "*Behold another great genius rising up amongst us, who will prove a second* LUCRETIUS."

The opinion of Cicero was manifestly that of Virgil, as is obvious from his numerous attempts to copy or imitate him through the whole of his various poems: but the delicate compliment before us, he appears to have treasured up with peculiar pleasure, and to have waited with an eager desire to introduce the terms in which it was conveyed with a dexterous felicity of application; and we at length find, that he has reserved it for the last book of his Æneid, where it is elegantly and successfully employed in a description of the young Ascanius. But Virgil has given a still more pointed instance than the present, of his high opinion of the poetic talents of Lucretius, in the second book of his Georgics. No classical reader can be ignorant of the admirable digression on the pleasures of rural retirement, in conjunction with the study of philosophy, with which this book concludes. Such was the life, and such the pursuits of our poet;—the thought seems suddenly to have entered the mind of Virgil as he was writing—he instantly drops his general description for an individual portrait; and, imitating the very language of the character he meant to delineate, thus abruptly bursts forth in his praise:

> FELIX! qui potuit rerum cognoscere caussas,
> Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
> Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari †.

* *Magnæ spes altera Romæ.* It has been generally understood, till of late, that this exclamation of Cicero, instead of referring to Lucretius, referred to himself. For this new interpretation, I am indebted to the critical acumen of Dr. Warton; and it is at once so ingenious and plausible, and so infinitely superior to the former, that, I apprehend, it will be admitted by every scholar for the future. It equally takes away the vanity, which cannot but attach to Cicero upon the old explanation, and the incongruity necessarily resulting from confounding an eminent poet with an eminent orator. I am indebted, also, to the same able expositor for the happy idea of applying to Lucretius the verses in a subsequent passage from the second book of the Georgics.

† How blest the sage! whose soul could pierce each cause
Of changeful Nature, and her wond'rous laws;

In addition to these illustrious testimonies of the merit of Lucretius, Ovid has boldly declared, that his poem shall only perish with the destruction of the world *. Gellius † and Cornelius Nepos ‡ affirm, that he was "most excellently endowed with wisdom and eloquence, and ought to be ranked among the most elegant poets that have ever written;" while Casaubon has, without qualification, asserted, in more modern times, that "he is the best author of the Latin tongue §." And yet, notwithstanding these decisive sentiments of such very competent judges, there have been persons, who, because they were too ignorant to understand him, or too dull to be animated by the fire of his genius, have rashly taken upon them to deny him every kind of merit. To those of a false and turgid taste he has appeared too simple; to those of a superficial mind, too deep and obscure.

Perhaps no critic of modern times has more justly appreciated the style and talents of Lucretius than Mr. Hume, in the following passage: "Pope and Lucretius seem to lie in the two greatest extremes of refinement and simplicity, in which a poet can indulge himself, without being guilty of any blameable excess. All this interval may be filled with poets, who may differ from each other, but may be equally admirable, each in his peculiar style and manner. Corneille and Congreve, who carry their wit and refinement somewhat farther than Mr. Pope, (if poets of so different a kind can be compared together,) and Sophocles and Terence, who are more simple than Lucretius, seem

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Could trample Fear beneath his foot, and brave
Fate, and stern Death, and Hell's resounding wave. SOTHEBY.

The verses in Lucretius, of which these are a manifest imitation, occur in Book I. v. 69, and are there applied to Epicurus.

* Carmina SUBLIMIS tunc sunt peritura LUCRETII,
Exitio terras cum dabit una dies. AMOR. i. 15, 23.

† Poetam ingenio et facundiâ præcellentem. ‡ Inter elegantissimos poetas.

§ Lucretius Latinitatis author optimus. Not. in Johan. c. 5.

to have gone out of that medium in which the most perfect productions are found, and to be guilty of some excess in these opposite characters. Of all the great poets, Virgil and Racine, in my opinion, lie nearest the centre, and are the farthest removed from both the extremities *."

To this honourable testimony of Mr. Hume, the reader must excuse my recurring to the equally advantageous opinion of Dr. Warton; than whom no scholar was ever better acquainted with Lucretius, and no critic more competent to decide upon his merits. "I am next," says he, "to speak of Lucretius, whose merit, as a poet, has never yet been sufficiently displayed, and who seems to have had more fire, spirit, and energy, more of the *vivida vis animi*, than any of the Roman poets, not excepting Virgil himself. Whoever imagines, with Tully †, that Lucretius had not a great genius, is desired to cast his eye on two pictures he has given us at the beginning of his poem: the first of Venus with her lover Mars, beautiful to the last degree ‡, and more glowing than any picture painted by Titian; the second §, of that terrible and gigantic figure, the dæmon of superstition, worthy the energetic pencil of Michael Angelo. Neither do I think, that the description that immediately follows, of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, was excelled by the famous picture of Timanthes on the same subject, of which Pliny speaks so highly, in the thirty-fifth book of his Natural History: especially the minute and moving circumstance of her perceiving the grief of her father Agememnon, and of the priest's concealing his sacrificing knife, and of the spectators bursting into tears, and her falling on her knees. Few passages, even in Virgil himself,

* Essays, Vol. i. p. 209. † This was not, in reality, as I have just pointed out, the opinion of Tully, but quite the contrary. Dr. Warton refers to the common, but erroneous reading, and a reading which is now, I believe, universally relinquished for that I have given in p. xliv.

‡ Lib. i. 33 § Lib. i. 63.

are so highly finished, contain such lively descriptions, or are so harmonious in their versification, as where our poet speaks of the fruitfulness occasioned throughout all nature, by vernal ſhowers*; of the ravages committed by tempestuous winds; of the difficulty of his undertaking, where, after mentioning the great obscurity of his subject, he breaks out into that enthusiastic rapture†:

> Obscure the subject: but the thirst of fame
> Burns all my bosom; and through ev'ry nerve
> Darts the proud love of letters, and the muse.
> I feel th' inspiring power; and roam resolv'd
> Through paths PIERIAN never trod before.
> Sweet are the springing founts with nectar new;
> Sweet the new flowers that bloom: but sweeter still
> Those flowers to pluck, and weave a roseat wreath,
> The muses yet to mortals ne'er have deign'd.

"The second book opens with a sublime description of a true philosopher, standing on the top of the temple of wisdom, and looking down with pity and contempt on the *busy hum of men.* This is followed by a forcible exhortation to temperance of each kind, and by that account of the pleasures of a country life‡, which Virgil has exactly copied at the end of his second book of the Georgics. The fears and the cares that infest human life are afterwards personified in the following manner§:

> But if all this be idle, if the CARES,
> The TERRORS still that haunt, and harass man,
> Dread not the din of arms,—o'er kings and chiefs,
> Press unabash'd, unaw'd by glittering pomp,
> The purple robe unheeding—

"These images are surely far superior to those admired ones of Horace:

* Lib. i. 251. † Ver. 921. Dr. Warton quotes the original: I have exchanged it for the ensuing version, for the benefit of the English reader. ‡ Lib. ii. 24. § Lib. ii. 46, 50.

———Nec CURAS laqueata circum
Tecta volantes———
Scandit æratas vitiosa naves
CURA.

"I know not how to resist the temptation of giving the reader the landscape of a distant mountain, with the flocks feeding on the side of it*; and I could wish to have set down the description that immediately follows, of a field of battle†, or the subsequent one of a cow's lamenting her calf that was sacrificed ‡.—

"In the beginning of the third book, which opens with the praises of Epicurus, is a passage, that of itself, without alleging other instances, is sufficient to shew the strength and sublimity of the author's imagination §.

"This image always put me mind of that exalted one in Milton, which is so strongly conceived:

On heavenly ground they stood, and from the shore
They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss,
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains to assault
Heav'n's height, and with the centre mix the pole ‖.

"Our poet adds, in lines as finished and as smooth as Virgil's, that he then saw the happy and undisturbed state of the gods.

"On a perusal of this passage, can one forbear crying out¶ with the author?

* Lib. ii. 317. This, and all the ensuing passages referred to, are quoted at large, in Dr. Warton's Dissertation. The reference alone is here given, for the sake of brevity: the reader may easily turn to them at his option. † Lib. ii. 323. ‡ Lib. ii. 355. § Lib. iii. 14. ‖ Par. Lost, vii. 210. ¶ Lib. iii. 228.

——On these vast themes
As deep I ponder, a sublime delight,
A sacred horror sways me—Nature thus
By thy keen skill through all her depths unveil'd.

" The description of a person in a deep lethargy *; of the effects of drunkenness †; of the falling-sickness ‡; and the noble prosopopeia ‖, where NATURE is introduced, chiding her ungrateful sons, for their folly and discontent, are equal to any thing in the Roman poesy: as is likewise the conclusion of this book, where the poet allegorizes all the punishments of hell §.

" In the fourth book, our author has painted the evils and inconveniences attending the passion of love, in the liveliest terms. No poet seems to have felt more strongly than Lucretius.—

" I know not what apology to make to the reader for such a number of quotations; but I have always thought, that general criticism, without producing particular passages, was both useless and unentertaining. Besides, I look upon the giving him these descriptions, to be like leading him through a gallery, adorned with the most exquisite paintings. I am sure there is no piece by the hand of Guido or the Carracci, that exceeds the following group of allegorical personages ¶:

SPRING comes and VENUS, and, with foot advanc'd,
The light-wing'd ZEPHYR, harbinger belov'd;
Maternal FLORA strewing, ere she treads,
O'er ev'ry footstep flowers of choicest hue,
And the glad ether loading with perfumes.
Then HEAT succeeds, the parch'd ETESIAN breeze,
And dust-discolour'd CERES; AUTUMN, then,
Follows, and tipsy BACCHUS, arm in arm,
And STORMS, and TEMPESTS; EURUS roars amain,

* Lib. iii. 465. † Lib. iii. 475. ‡ Lib. iii. 486. ‖ Lib. iii. 944. § Lib. iii. 991.
¶ Lib. v. 736.

And the red SOUTH brews thunders: till, at length,
COLD shuts the scene, and WINTER's train prevails,
SNOWS, hoary SLEET, and FROST, with chattering teeth.

"The fifth book concludes with a description of the uncivilized state* of man, together with the origin and progress of government, arts, and sciences. The poetical beauties it contains are so many, and so various, that, intending to publish a translation of this part of Lucretius, with critical observations, I wave all farther mention of it at present †.

"The sixth book is the least obscure and abstruse of any, being wholly taken up with describing the appearances of nature, and accounting for some seeming prodigies. The plague, with which the whole poem concludes, being more known, and perhaps more read than any other part of it, I shall not point out any particular passages."

The poverty of the Latin language was not the only evil Lucretius had to struggle with. The foreign and domestic contests in which the republic was involved, rendered the times unfavourable to literary publications of every kind;—and the philosophy he was about to disseminate, struck strongly at the root of every popular prejudice, and even of the established religion itself. The former, however, was an evil of lighter consideration; for the man who writes for immortality, and feels a triumphant pre-sentiment that his works will for ever survive him, can readily forego the applause of the fleeting hour in which he personally exists: he looks forward to future ages, and expects from posterity that garland of unfading flowers which his misjudging coevals refuse to his labours on their first appearance. The latter, however, was an evil of more considerable moment; for, notwithstanding

* Lib. v. 736. † Why this intention was not complied with, I know not. Every true lover of poetic excellence must regret the cause, be it what it may: but none more than the present translator.

the consciousness a man may have of the rectitude of his own intention, and the truth of his own tenets, nothing is so difficult as to eradicate ancient and national prejudices, and, more especially, prejudices that relate to an established religion which necessarily creates many of the first offices of the government that establishes it. This was precisely the situation of Lucretius, when he first ventured upon his poem. The popular religion was the grossest and most iniquitous that can be conceived; and every unbiassed mind must agree with him that it would have been better for the people to have had no religion whatever, than to have been in the belief and profession of one that subserved almost every species of vice, and could be accommodated to the purposes of every party, and every plot. This popular religion, moreover, as I have just observed, formed an essential part of the constitution of the republic, as well as proved a source of its most lucrative offices and employments. During the monarchy of Rome, the king himself, in this respect resembling the monarch of our own country, was the pontifex maximus, or supreme head of the church*: and when, upon the expulsion of the Tarquins, this office existed no longer, the people, at the instigation of Junius Brutus, appointed a *Rex Sacrorum*†, or lord of religious ceremonies, to be for ever elected from the Patrician order, and to have a supreme control over all the countless ranks of curiones, flamines, flaminicæ, vestal virgins, augurs, celeres, salii, and whatever classifications besides were included in the sacred system of Numa. It should be noticed, however, that this economy of the church was at all times kept totally distinct from the civil department of the state; and that neither the chief pontiff himself, nor the augurs, nor any person possessed of any religious office whatever, was suffered to interfere in the concerns of the latter; but that each was compelled to devote himself solely to the care of the public worship, and his own peculiar function‡.

* Plut. in Num. † Dion. Hal. l. v. Antiq. Liv. l. vii. ‡ Ibid.

Yet, notwithstanding this wise and salutary restriction, it is impossible to conceive, that any man could, without personal danger, encounter the animosity of so numerous and powerful a body as those religious orders must have formed, by the propagation of doctrines, avowedly subversive of their entire constitution. The most violent demagogue never dared attempt it: and consuls, tribunes, prætors, and quæstors, found it equally for their interest, whatever may have been the infidelity of their hearts, to reverence the established system. Lucretius, however, like an honest man, and one who could not look, without contempt, upon the absurd superstitions of his country, hazarded the danger, and was determined to employ, both the force of argument, and the charms of poetic imagery, to convince the republic of its errors. He tells his countrymen, that they need never be afraid of sound and genuine philosophy: that philosophy can by no means introduce vice and immorality into the world; but that their own absurd and abominable superstitions might do, and often had done so. And, in proof of this latter assertion, he adverts to, and relates, in a masterly manner, the story of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, in consequence of the demand of such an oblation, by the pretended goddess Diana*. He informs them, that they need not be afraid of forsaking the altars of their gods, from any idea that these imaginary beings could punish them for apostacy; for that Epicurus himself, the most undaunted of all the philosophers, and upon whom, had they possessed any power whatever, they would doubtless have wrecked their utmost vengeance, had never sustained any detriment in consequence of his religious opinions.

> No thunder him, no fell revenge pursu'd
> Of heav'n incens'd, or deities in arms.
> Urg'd, rather, by such bugbear threats, to press,
> With firmer spirit, forward through the bounds
> Of nature, close conceal'd; the flaming walls

* Book I. v. 69.

Of heaven to scale, and dart his dauntless eye,
Till the vast whole beneath him stood display'd *.

And he frequently observes that, however novel and alarming his tenets may appear, and, however unpropounded, in any popular way prior to his own attempt, nothing can be so absurd, as to reject them solely on this account; that it is the duty of every wise man to investigate the proofs to which any important doctrine appeals, and fairly to abide by the legitimate consequences of such investigation.

Cease, then, alarm'd by aught profound or strange,
Right reason to reject: weigh well the proofs
Each scheme advances; if, by truth upheld,
Embrace the doctrine; but if false, abjure †.

It is but just to observe, however, that neither Lucretius himself, nor any of his followers or admirers, were harassed by the Roman government for their attachment to the sentiments of Epicurus. Notwithstanding the prejudices of the people, and the power of the priesthood, the right of private judgment was, at this period, never interfered with. Philosophers tolerated philosophers; the religion of Numa tolerated them all; and, in the mystery of divine providence, the tremendous plague of persecution was reserved for future and more enlightened generations.

Thus pleasantly and profitably glided away the tranquil life of Lucretius. Yet it was not against the superstitions of his countrymen alone, that he directed his poetic pen; but against their ambition, against their rapacity, against their avarice, against the general strife and anxiety that prevailed for public honours, and popular applause: and the unworthy means that were incessantly employed to obtain them. The latter part of his third book is filled with the most just and beautiful reflexions upon these various deviations from morality, and all

* Book II v. 1049. † Book I.

virtue: the indignity of the pursuit, and the fallacy of the enjoyment.

From "the cool, sequestered vale" of his own retirement he frequently took a pleasure in looking at the busy, bustling world, at a distance: not, as he expressly observes, that the dangers to which the distracted multitude is exposed, afford us any delight, but that it is highly gratifying to feel secure from such dangers and toils ourselves *: to mount, as it were, some firm and elevated cliff that commands the prospect, and survey the restless scene beneath:

> To watch the giddy crowd that, deep below,
> For ever wander in pursuit of bliss;
> To mark the strife for honours, and renown,
> For wit, and wealth insatiate, ceaseless urg'd,
> Day after day, with labour unrestrain'd †.

The whole passage is so strikingly beautiful, that I am not surprised at its having been copied and imitated by poets in every age, and, nearly, in every nation.

> O! wretched mortals! race perverse, and blind!
> Through what dread dark, what perilous pursuits
> Pass ye this round of being! know ye not
> Of all ye toil for, Nature nothing asks
> But, for the body, freedom from disease,
> And sweet, unanxious quiet for the mind?—
> And little claims the body to be sound:
> But little serves to strew the paths we tread
> With joys beyond e'en nature's utmost wish.
> What though the dome be wanting, whose proud walls
> A thousand lamps irradiate, propt sublime
> By frolic forms of youths in massy gold,
> Flinging their splendours o'er the midnight feast?
> Though gold and silver blaze not o'er the board,

* Book II. v. 3. † Book II. v. 9.

Nor music echo round the gaudy roof?
Yet listless laid the velvet grass along,
Near gliding streams; by shadowy trees o'er-arch'd,
Such pomps we need not; such still less when SPRING
Leads forth her laughing train, and the warm year
Paints the green meads with roseat flowers profuse.
On down reclin'd, or wrapt in purple robe,
The thirsty fever burns with heat as fierce
As when its victim on a pallet pants *.

Such was the life of wisdom, of simplicity and temperance, that was taught and practised both by Epicurus and Lucretius; a life that, it might have been expected, would have secured them from all misrepresentation, or aspersion of character. And yet, strange to relate, or rather, strange it would be, if we did not observe the same thing occur every day in our own age, these very moralists have been accused of excess and gluttony; and the pure system they equally recommended and practised, has been esteemed the high road to debauchery and the gratification of every illicit passion. I am not surprised, indeed, that such infamous and idle reports should be often believed in the present day, or should, occasionally, have been accredited even among the Christian fathers; because I know that the writings of many of the Platonic, as well as Peripatetic philosophers, who successively governed the physics and metaphysics of the Christian church in its earlier ages, may be adduced in corroboration of such reports. But I am truly surprised at the envy and wilful perversion of all fact that could alone have engendered such reports at the first, and the readiness with which Plutarch, Seneca, and even Cicero himself, after he had abjured his primal faith, countenanced the libels by which the character of Epicurus was unjustly defamed. Intimately acquainted with the tranquil and temperate life of Lucretius, Cicero, at least, must have

* Book II. v. 14.

known, that both in his diet and his morality, as well as in his philosophic doctrines, he was a close and undeviating disciple of the Grecian sage. Yes, they were lovers of PLEASURE—and LUXURIOUS at their meals: they both confess the charge. But what was the pleasure of which they were lovers, and the meals in which they indulged so luxuriously? Cassius himself, and in the very words of Epicurus, shall tell us, as he told Cicero in an expostulatory letter he wrote to him, after having heard that Cicero had favoured the circulation of such aspersions. The declaration of Cassius, moreover, is entitled to the utmost credit, from his having intimately studied the life and doctrines of Epicurus; and, as I have already related, been first a fellow-student with both Cicero and Lucretius, and afterwards an intimate and confidential friend. "Those," says he, "whom we call lovers of PLEASURE, are real lovers of GOODNESS and JUSTICE: they are men, who practise and cultivate every virtue: for no true pleasure can exist, without a good and virtuous life *. When we assert then, that PLEASURE is the chief good, the prime felicity of man, we do not mean the pleasures of the luxurious and the libidinous: the pleasures of the taste, the touch, or any of the grosser senses, as the ignorant, *or those who wilfully mistake our opinions*, maliciously assert: but what constitutes pleasure with us is the possession of a body exempt from pain, and a mind devoid of perturbation. It is not the company of the lascivious, nor the luxurious tables of the wealthy, nor an indulgence in any sensual delights, that can make life happy; but it is a sound and unerring

* Ii qui a nobis φιλησονοι vocantur, sunt φιλοκαλοι και φιλοδικαιοι, omnesque virtutes et colunt, et retinent: ου γαρ εστιν ηδεως ανευ του καλως και δικαιως ζην, &c. Malbranche asserted the very same proposition, and was misunderstood in the same manner. "Tout plaisir," said he, "est un bien, et rend actuellement heureux celui qui le goute." Nouveau Systeme de la Nature et de la Grace. This declaration was conceived to be impious and immoral; and it was soon vehemently attacked, in a publication entitled, "Reflexions Philosophiques, et Theologiques sur le nouveau Systeme," &c. It was necessary, therefore, to explain the meaning of Malbranche; and we hence find it developed, in almost the words of Cassius, in a periodical publication of much repute in his own day. "Tout plaisir est un bien: mais qui est ce que c'est le plaisir?—c'est la vertu, c'est la grace, c'est l'amour de Dieu, ou plutot, c'est Dieu seul qui est notre beatitude." Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres. Mois de Decembre, 1685.

judgment, that investigates and developes causes, that informs us what ought reasonably to be desired, and what to be avoided, and which banishes those opinions that disturb the soul with perpetual anxiety and tumult."

With respect to Plutarch and Cicero, it must be confest, however, that they not only knew that the popular prejudice against Epicurus was without foundation, but occasionally acknowledged it to be so *.

Let him, then, who accuses Epicurus of illicit pleasures, examine the delights in which he indulged; let him who defames him as a glutton, produce his dishes. Let him enter into his garden, let him sit down at the sumptuous table it exhibits, and when convinced by the banquet itself, let him rise up and pronounce his condemnation †. The epistles which Epicurus occasionally addressed to his friends, and which were afterwards collected into one volume, contained a statement of his daily regimen. These unfortunately are now no longer ‡.

* Thus, Plutarch, after asserting as follows, *Amicis carere, actioni privari; Deum nullum putare, voluptati indulgere, res omnes negligere, ista sunt quæ homines omnes, ipsis exceptis, huic sectæ attribuant:* immediately subjoins, αδικως φυσι τις αλλα την δοξαν, ου τ' αληθειαν σκοπουμεν. "Every one knows that this opinion was never deserved by Epicurus: but we give it as an opinion, and not as a truth." Plut. lib. ii. c. 9.

In like manner, Cicero declares of the same philosopher, "Negat quemquam jucunde posse vivere, nisi idem honeste, sapienter, justeque vivat. Nihil gravius, nihil philosophiâ dignius: nisi idem hoc ipsum honeste, sapienter, juste, ad voluptatem referret. Quid melius quam fortunam exiguam intervenire sapienti? sed hoc is ne dicit, qui, cum dolorem non modo maximum malum, sed solum malum etiam dixerit, toto corpore opprimi possit doloribus acerrimis, tum cum maxime contra fortunam glorietur? quod idem melioribus etiam verbis Metrodorus, occupavi inquit, &c." Tusc. Quæst. l. v.

† I am indebted, for this passage, to Creech. It is a part of his Latin, and learned address to his friend Coddrington, to whom he dedicated his edition of Lucretius. Qui libidinem Epicuro objicit, demonstrat illius furta et delicias: qui gulam, ferculà, &c.

‡ The destruction which has thus attended the works of Epicurus, compel us, in quoting from him, to have recourse to subsequent authors, who, like Diocles and Diogenes Laertius, have preserved certain parts of his writings in their own compositions. These, indeed, are but few, yet sufficiently numerous to prove to us, that Lucretius has been a most faithful expositor of his entire system. It is said, that a complete and original treatise of Epicurus upon his own philosophy has been lately discovered in the ruins of Herculaneum, and that we may soon expect a printed edition of it. This, as a curiosity, will be truly valuable, and I am sorry that I cannot avail myself of it at present. Yet, after the very ample

in existence; but Diogenes Laertius, who, in his age, had an opportunity of perusing them, and has preserved several in the course of his biography, tells us, from what he had read, that his diet was the most temperate imaginable: that he satisfied himself with the herbs of his garden intermixed with fruits, and the plainest pottage. "I am perfectly contented," said Epicurus, in one of these epistles, "with bread and water alone; but send me a piece of your Cyprian cheese, that I may indulge myself whenever I feel disposed for a luxurious feast." Such, adds Diogenes, who has preserved the anecdote, was the life of him who declared that his pursuit was pleasure *. And it is observed by Diocles, that his disciples followed the example of their preceptor: that water was their common beverage, and that they never drank more than a small cup of wine. When Demetrius, therefore, besieged the city of Athens, and the inhabitants were reduced to the utmost extremity, the scholars of Epicurus sustained the common calamity, with less inconvenience than any other citizens: the philosopher supported them at his own expence, sharing with them daily a small ration of his beans †.

"I readily," says Seneca himself, in one of his epistles, "quote the excellent maxims of Epicurus, that I may convince those, who deceive themselves as to their object, and expect to find in such maxims a screen for their vices, that, to whatever sect they attach themselves, they must live virtuously. This is the inscription over the garden-gate: "Here, stranger, mayest thou happily take up thine abode; here plea-

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manner in which every part of it has been unfolded by Lucretius, it is rather to be welcomed as a curiosity alone, than as containing any new matter of essential importance.

* Διοκλης δε εν ΤΗ ΤΡΙΤΗ της επιδρομης φησιν ευτελεστα τα και λιτοτατα διατωμενοι· κυτυλη γουν (φησιι) οινιδιου ηρκουντο· το δε παν ὑδωρ ην αυτοις ποτον.—Αυτος τε φησιν εν ταις επιστολαις, ὑδατι μονον αρκεισθαι, και αρτῳ λιτῳ· και τεμαχιον μοι τυρου (φησι) Κυθριδιου ιν ὁταν βουλωμαι πολυτελεσασθαι, δυνωμαι. Τοιουτος ην ὁ την ἡδονην ειναι τελος δογματιζων. Diog. Laert. x. 11.

† Plut. in Vit. Demetr.

sure is the supreme good : the kind and hospitable owner of this mansion, will readily receive you, and set before you barley-cakes, and large draughts of water from the spring;" adding, at the same time, " Is not this fare delicious?" Nor was the death-bed of Epicurus at variance with the uniform temperance and tranquillity of his life. The disorder to which he fell a victim, was a stone in the bladder: it had, for a long time, been occasionally attended with excruciating pain; but for fourteen days previous to his death, the pain was uninterrupted. Yet he bore it with admirable composure and patience, propounding the most important and sublime precepts to his students, who tenderly surrounded him, and exhorting them, with his last breath, to lead a life of sobriety and virtue.

With respect to illicit amours, they are crimes which both Epicurus * and Lucretius † were incessantly declaiming against; and even Cicero, notwithstanding all his enmity to their doctrines, acknowledges, in many places, that the Epicureans were uniformly worthy men: and that no philosophers were so little addicted to vices of any kind ‡.

" Wisdom," says Epicurus himself, in his epistle to Menæceus, " is the chief blessing of philosophy, since she gives birth to all other virtues, which unite in teaching us that no man can live happily who does not live wisely, conscientiously, and justly; nor, on the other hand, can he live wisely, conscientiously, and justly, without living happily: for virtue is inseparable from a life of happiness, and a life of happiness is equally inseparable from virtue. Be these, then, and similar precepts, the subjects of thy meditation by night and by day, both when alone, and with the friend of thy bosom; and never, whe-

* Galen in Art. Med.

† See, especially, the latter part of Book IV. of the Nature of Things.

‡ Quæst. Tusc. l. iii. Epist ad Famil. passim.

ther asleep or awake, shalt thou be oppressed with anxiety, but live as a God among mankind *."

If then, it be inquired, whence such unjust accusations could have arisen against a sect, that so little deserved them, Du Rondelle, who has investigated this matter with much critical penetration, shall inform us. "To hear such a man as Epicurus," says he, "was a pleasure, not often to be met with. For, instructed in the opinions of all the philosophers, endowed with a quick conception, possessed of great eloquence, nor ever opening his lips without dignity, in a most delightful garden, decorated with a variety of fragrant flowers that perfumed the air with their odours, he arrested the attention of every one with more than Herculean chains; whence Laertius compares him to the Sirens; nor was it possible for an auditor to quit this delightful spot, without feeling the bonds of friendship for a host who was equally successful in his researches, and enchanting in his diction. The mode of philosophizing which he adopted, was highly approved of. Its report spread over all Athens, and was in the mouth of every one: from every quarter visitors thronged to our philosopher, and were anxious to intermix in his audience; while the professors of other systems were deserted, and themselves left alone in their schools.

"This displeased the philosophers, but more especially the Stoics: and as Diotimus, one of the latter sect, had already discovered impudence enough to defame whomsoever he chose, he was applied to, to write against Epicurus. They now burst forth, therefore, with fifty lascivious epistles, pretended to have been written by the philosopher

* Διο και φιλοσοφιας το τιμιωτερον ὑπαρχει ἡ φρονησις, ἐξ ἧς αἱ λοιπαι πασαι πεφυκασιν αρεται· διδασκουσαι ὡς ουκ εστιν ἡδεως ζην, ανευ του φρονιμως, και καλως, και δικαιως· ουδε φρονιμως, και καλως, και δικαιως, ανευ του ἡδεως. Συμπεφυκασι γαρ αἱ αρεται τω ζην ἡδεως· και το ζην ἡδεως, τουτων εστιν αχωριστον.—Ταυτα ουν και τα τουτοις συγγενη μελετα διαπαντος, ἡμερας και νυκτος, προς σεαυτῳ, και ουδεποτε ουθ' ὑπαρ διαταραχθηση, ζηση δε ὡς θεος ανθροποις. Diog. Laert. x. 132. 135.

himself. The tale runs that Epicurus, both in the porticos, and public walks of Athens, at one time indulges himself with Leontius, at another time with Themista: that he wears out the day in sleep, and the night in gambling, drunkenness, or public riots: that he is now guilty of some crime, and now of some impiety: but that, at all times, he is sottish, and unworthy of attention.

"To these calumnies Epicurus made no reply. He regarded them as belonging to the class of ephemeral rumours that die away of their own accord as soon as they are found incompetent to their end. The consciousness of his own innocence was sufficient for himself; and the fortitude and tranquillity he discovered in the midst of such infamous aspersions are stronger proofs of the integrity of his life than the testimony of a thousand witnesses. To despise the evil reports that are raised against us, and to confide in the just judgment of unbiassed posterity, is to be revenged upon our enemies in the most splendid manner possible. As to Diotimus, therefore, Epicurus neither hated, nor was incensed against him: but he pitied, and was sorry for him. He left him quietly, however, to that fate, which was certainly well deserved, but unexpected on his own part; for the writings of this calumniator were so full of ribaldry, and mere attempts at wit, that Aristophanes, with all his comic powers, could never have excited half so much of the public laughter against any one, as Diotimus at last excited against himself*."

Those, who wish to see a further account of these unjust and iniquitous reports, may consult Gassendi's Life of this celebrated philoso-

* Rondellius de Vit. et Mor. Epicuri, p. 15. The infamous letters which Diotimus endeavoured to circulate as the writings of Epicurus, and on which he founded his defamations, were proved, in a public court, to be forgeries of his own, and the author was punished accordingly. Laert. x. 3. Athen. xiii. 611. Nothing, indeed, can give us a higher opinion of the innocence and integrity of Epicurus than the fact that his most prying and inveterate adversaries could only attack him by forgeries and fraudulent impositions.

pher, where the whole is detailed at a still greater length; and with much critical research: with more, indeed, than Du Rondelle thinks necessary towards establishing his innocence. Brucker has also successfully engaged in the same benevolent cause; and his vindication is, in every respect, complete and satisfactory.

The virtues and morality of Epicurus were those of Lucretius, his disciple, and ardent admirer, and, for the most part, those of the whole school.

We are acquainted with the names of a variety of young Romans who were fellow-students with Cicero and Lucretius; and to several of whom I have already had occasion to advert. Of these there is scarcely one to be found, who did not prove, in future life, an honour and ornament to his country. The examples, indeed, they so uniformly afford us of private friendship and patriotic virtue, in practising the former of which Cicero himself allows them to have been unequalled in the history of mankind *, as well as of clear and cultivated understanding, are truly astonishing, if not altogether unrivalled. From what then, but the merest malevolence, or the grossest and most unpardonable ignorance, can the heavy charge of gluttony, voluptuousness, and immorality have been raised against a sect, whose doctrines and discipline were the purest of their age? and who in themselves, whether regarded collectively or individually, were perpetually exhibiting the most convincing proofs of wisdom, simplicity, and virtue?

Of all the enemies of Epicurus, the Stoics were the most inveterate; and I have already observed, that neither falsehoods nor forgeries were neglected by this sect, in order to vilify his character in the opinion of the people. Nor was this to be wondered at, for the doctrines and

* De Fin. l. i. 20.

morality of Epicurus were levelled more immediately against the Stoics, than against any other philosophers. Zeno had opened his school but a short time anterior to the arrival of Epicurus at Athens. There was, in reality, but little new in what he taught; it was rather a system of eclectism, of general pillage and plunder from existing theories, than the invention of an original philosophy. Yet his dogmas were announced in new and affected terms; they were intermixed with abstruse and unintelligible paradoxes, which is too generally conceived in every age to be an unquestionable mark of wisdom and profound research; and these, by the external aid of gravity in speech, in dress and demeanour, obtained, for the inventor, a popularity so considerable, that the Academy, and almost every other school, was deserted for the Porch. The plan proposed by Epicurus, and his own natural disposition, were directly the reverse of such mummery. Affable and cheerful in himself, he saw no reason why man should become morose, in order to become wise; the paths of wisdom, in his estimation, ought to be paths of pleasantness, and virtue and happiness to walk arm in arm. In opposition, therefore, to the Porch, he opened an elegant and delightful Garden, and, instead of the grimace of external austerity, exhibited the most captivating urbanity of manners, and facility of address. He denied the absurd doctrine of fatality, the very pivot of the Stoic machinery, and boldly contended for the free agency of man. The school of Zeno had much, therefore, to dread, from such an adversary; its adherents beheld the Porch deserted in its turn for the Garden, and, with malicious invention, endeavoured to destroy the fair fame of their adversary by the base means I have already exposed.

But it was not with the philosophy of the Porch alone that the new school of the Garden interfered. The dialectics of the Academy and of the Lyceum, and especially those of the former, were daily becoming more perplext and mazy, and the search after truth was dwindling

into a mere display of subtle and logomachic disputation. The simplicity adopted by Epicurus in the selection of terms, and his caution in the assumption of principles, were an indirect attack, as well as a severe reproof, upon this idle and growing fashion. The Academics were sensible of it from their diminished numbers, and almost empty walls: and they readily conspired, with the Stoics, in their unworthy attempt to overthrow so formidable a battery. The animosity which was thus early excited, continued to operate almost as long as Stoicism and Platonism continued to exist; and the disingenuous plan pursued by their first votaries at Athens was, as I have already observed, too generally had recourse to at Rome even by Cicero and Seneca themselves.

But the Epicureans, it may be said, were atheists: they denied the existence of a God, and of a future state; and some parts of the poem of Lucretius are expressly written to establish such denial.—Let us examine these assertions separately.

If, in the first place, it be atheism to deny the existence of those absurd and vicious deities, who were the sole objects of adoration with the multitude, the Epicureans were certainly guilty of atheism; for such they did deny. But it is so far from being proveable that they uniformly disbelieved the existence of an eternal First Cause of all things; that it is, perhaps, impossible to produce an Epicurean philosopher of any age against whom such a charge can be legitimately substantiated. The philosophers of this school, on the contrary, have, at all times, as openly avowed the existence of such a deity, and, in many instances, as strenuously contended for the truth of such an avowal, as the disciples of any system whatsoever. Such, in the seventeenth century, were Gassendi, and Cudworth, whose physics are altogether founded upon the atomic hypothesis; such was Abelard in the twelfth, Alexander, who was a contemporary with Plutarch, in the first century, and

such was Epicurus himself. Thus, in the opening of a letter addressed to a favourite disciple: "Believe, *before all things*, that God is an immortal and blessed being; as, indeed, common sense should teach us concerning God. Conceive nothing of him that is repugnant to blessedness and immortality, and admit every thing that is consistent with these perfections.*" This belief of Epicurus is, indeed, acknowledged by ancient writers in general: Cicero expressly tells us, that he was punctilious in the discharge of his religious duties †; and Seneca, that he worshiped God on account of his most excellent majesty and supreme nature alone, without any idea either of future reward or punishment ‡.

He admitted, moreover, the existence of orders of intelligences, possessed of superior powers to the human race, whom, like the angels and archangels of the Christian system, he conceived to be immortal from their nature; to have been created anterior to the formation of the world, to be endowed with far ampler faculties of enjoyment than mankind, to be formed of far purer materials, and to exist in far happier abodes. The chief difference which I have been able to discern between the immortal spirits of the Epicurean system, and of the Christian theologist, is, that while the latter are supposed to take an active part in the divine government of the world, the former are represented as having no kind of connexion with it: since it was conceived by Epicurus that such an interference is absolutely beyond their power, and would be totally subversive of their beatitude §.

In the passage immediately subsequent to that I have just quoted, he purposely and obviously discriminates them from the Supreme Being, whom he speaks of in the singular number, and consequently re-

* ΠΡΩΤΟΝ μεν τον ΘΕΟΝ ζωον αφθαρτον, &c. Ad Menœceum. Diog. Laert. lx. 5. 123. Edit. West. See the passage quoted at length in p. lxvii. † De Fin. iii. 6. ‡ De Benef. iv. 19.

§ Ου γαρ συμφωνουσι πραγματεια, και φροντιδες, και οργαι, και χαριτες μακαριοτητι, αλλ' ασθενεια, και φοβω, και προσδεησει των πλησιον ταυτα γινεται. Diog. Laert. x. 77.

presents as One, and undivided. "There are also *deities*," says he, "and our knowledge of them is certain; yet not such deities as the vulgar apprehend, who cannot possibly trace the qualities they ascribe to them: hence, he is not impious who would take away the gods of the people, but he who attributes to them the opinions of the people: for it is the opinions, and not the presentiments of the people concerning these divinities, that are false *."

In deep abstraction from the world, and profound meditation on the mysteries of creation and providence, the venerable founder of the Epicurean sect maintained, that some knowledge might be acquired of the glorious figures, and the happiness of these immortal essences; and that, in proportion as we acquire this knowledge, and are consequently induced to imitate the purity and tranquillity of life in which their happiness was conceived to consist, our own felicity would be increased and exalted. To such abstractions from the world Epicurus therefore habitually resigned himself, and in such kind of quietism consisted the whole of his religion. Incapable of developing the essence of the supreme Godhead, he here contemplated the most perfect proofs of his wisdom, his power and his goodness, and fortified himself in the most unqualified resignation to his will. On the advantages of this disinterested piety, and subjects connected with it, he wrote several treatises †: and Lucretius, in a variety of passages of the ensuing poem, is as urgent as Epicurus could possibly have been, in

* The entire passage occurs thus: ΠΡΩΤΟΝ μεν τον ΘΕΟΝ, ζωον αφθαρτον και μακαριον νομιζων, ὡς ἡ κοινη του Θεου νοησις ὑπεγραφη· μηθεν μητε της μακαριοτητος ανοικιον αυτῳ προσαπτε· παν δε το φυλαττειν αυτου δυναμενον την μετα αφθαρσιας μακαριοτητα, περι αυτον δοξαζε· ΘΕΟΙ μεν γαρ εισιν, εναργης μεν γαρ εστιν αυτων ἡ γνωσις· οιους δ' αυτους ὁι πολλοι νομιζουσιν, ουκ εισιν· ου γαρ φυλαττουσιν αυτους οιους νομιζουσιν. Ασεβης δε, ουχ ὁ τους των πολλων θεους αναιρων, αλλ' ὁ τας των πολλων δοξας θεοις προσαπτων· ου γαρ προληψεις εισιν, αλλ' ὑπολημψεις ψευδεις αἱ των πολλων ὑπερ θεων αποφασεις. Epicur. ad Menæc. Vide Diog. Laert. x. 123.

† Those enumerated by Diogenes Laertius, who is supposed to have omitted one or two, are as follows: Χαιρεδημος, ἡ Περι Θεων: Chæredemus, or, On the Gods. Ἡγησιαναξ, ἡ Περι Ὁσιοτητος: Hegesianax, or, On Piety. Περι Δικαιοπραγιας: On Just Dealings. Περι Δικαιοσυνης, και των αλλων Αρετων: On Justice, and other Virtues. Περι Δωρων και Χαριτας: On Gifts and Graces.

recommending the same. With respect to the popular religion, he asserts:

> No—it can ne'er be piety, to turn
> To stocks and stones with deep-veil'd visage; light
> O'er every altar incense; o'er the dust
> Fall prostrate, and with outstretch'd arms invoke
> Through every temple every god that reigns;
> Soothe them with blood, and lavish vows on vows.
> This rather thou term piety, to mark
> With calm untrembling soul each scene ordain'd *.

Without this calmness of the soul, this sacred freedom from every gross and ungovernable passion, it is in vain, he asserts, in another place, to expect any benefit from these hallowed and religious seclusions, this spiritual quietism and devotion offered up, not at the shrines of the fabulous gods of the people, but in the great temple of "the immense concave of heaven," the pure abode of superior intelligences, who are well entitled to the appellation of divinities—being, themselves, the fairest resemblance of the supreme Creator. On this sublime subject, he thus expresses himself:

> For O ye Powers Divine! whose tranquil lives
> Flow free from care, with ceaseless sun-shine blest,—
> Who the vast whole could guide, midst all your ranks?
> Who grasp the reins that curb th' entire of Things,
> Turn the broad heavens, and pour through countless worlds
> Th' ethereal fire that feeds their vital throngs—
> Felt every moment, felt in every place?
> Who form the louring clouds, the lightning dart,
> And roll the clamorous thunder, oft in twain
> Rending the concave? or, full-deep retir'd,
> Who point in secret the mysterious shaft
> That, whilst the guilty triumphs, prostrates stern
> The fairest forms of innocence and worth †?

* Book V. v. 1222. † Book II. v. 1103.

This magnificent and tremendous Being he no where attempts to describe: but, to prove his existence, he adverts, in a variety of places, to those arbitrary and mysterious events which are perpetually recurring through all nature, baffling the expectations of the most prudent, and elevating us to the contemplation of a Divinity, supreme, individual, and omnipotent:

> So, from his awful shades, some POWER UNSEEN
> O'erturns all human greatness; treads to dust
> Rods, ensigns, crowns, the proudest pomps of state,
> And laughs at all the mockery of man *.

The *unseen*, *incomprehensible*, or *mysterious* POWER, is a phrase not unfrequently applied to the Divinity in most languages, but in none, perhaps, with so much appropriation as the Latin, in which the term VIS, or POWER, even without an adjunct, is put in apposition with NUMEN, MENS DIVINA, or the PRESENT GOD, and often used synonymously for these appellations. Thus the author of the Panegyric to Constantine Augustus: "O supreme Creator! whose names are as numerous as thou hast willed there should be languages among the nations; whom, for thou authorisest it to be so said, *it is impossible for us to know*—dwells not in thee that CERTAIN POWER, and DIVINE MIND, which is diffused through the whole world †?" The writer has selected the very words of Lucretius, VIS QUÆDAM, but has, at the same time, omitted his truly elegant and appropriate epithet of *abdita*, unseen, inscrutable, or mysterious:—VIS ABDITA QUÆDAM. Cicero, in his Milonian oration, has a passage still more to the point: "Nor can any one," says he, "think otherwise, unless he disbelieve that there exists a POWER or DIVINE ENERGY. But there does, there does exist this POWER; nor is it possible that a SOMETHING,

* Book V. v. 1262.

† Summe Sator! cujus tot nomina sunt, quot gentium linguas esse voluisti; quem (enim te ipse dici velis) *scire non possumus*: sive in te QUÆDAM VIS, MENSQUE DIVINA est, quâ toto infusus mundo, &c.

which perceives and actuates, should be present in these bodies, even in the midst of their infirmities, and not be present in so grand, so excellent a movement of nature: unless, indeed, such a POWER be to be denied for the sole reason that it is *not seen, or perceived*; as though we were able to behold this mind of ours by which we determine, by which we foresee, by which, at this moment, I myself act, and speak, or could plainly ascertain of what it consists, or where it resides. This, this, then, is THE POWER that has so often favoured this city with an incredible prosperity and happiness *." Let not, therefore, the theism of Lucretius be suspected, because, in conjunction with his countrymen in general, he represents the great author and arbiter of all things as an UNSEEN or INSCRUTABLE POWER. Even in the present age of the world, we only know him from his attributes,—from his word and from his works, for no man *hath* hitherto *seen God, or can see him.* The sacred scriptures are full of the same representation. Thus, Moses, in the very midst of an intercourse with which he was favoured by the Almighty, inquires what is his *name*, that he might inform the Israelites of it †. To the same effect, Zophar, in his interview with Job:

> Canst thou by searching find out God?
> Canst thou completely find out the Almighty ‡?

With which, the following sublime apostrophe of Job himself is in perfect unison:

* Nec vero quisquam aliter arbitrari potest, nisi qui nullam VIM esse ducit, NUMENVE DIVINUM.—Est, est profecto illa VIS; neque in his corporibus, atque in hac imbecillitate nostra, inest QUIDDAM, quod vigeat et sentiat, et non inest in hoc tanto naturæ tam præclaro motu; nisi forte idcirco esse non putant quia non apparet, nec cernitur; proinde quasi nostram ipsam mentem, quâ sapimus, quâ providemus, quâ hæc ipsa agimus, ac dicimus, videre, aut plane, qualis, aut ubi sit, sentire possumus. Ea VIS, ea igitur ipsa, quæ sæpe incredibiles huic urbi felicitates atque opes attulit. Sect. xxx. xxxi. p. 630. Edit. Gronov.

† Exod. iii. 13.

‡ Job, xi. 7: החקר אלוה תמצא
אם עד תכלית שדי תמצא

O that I knew where I might find him:—
Behold! I go forwards, but he is not there;
And backwards, but I cannot perceive him:
On the left hand I feel for him, but trace him not,
He enshroudeth the right hand, and I cannot see him *.

So, the devout Asaph:

In the sea is thy way,
And thy path in the deep waters,
And thy footsteps are not known †.

And hence the Athenians, in future ages, erected an altar to this same inscrutable and MYSTERIOUS POWER, and inscribed it ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΘΕΩ, "To THE UNKNOWN GOD." St. Paul remarked the inscription in his visit to this city, and particularly alludes to it in his address to the

* Job, xxiii. 3, 8, 9.

מי יתן ידעתי ואמצאהו׃
הן קדם אהלך ואיננו
ואחור ולא אבין לו׃
שמאל בעשתו ולא אחז
יעטף ימין ולא אראה׃

Our common version of ver. 9, of this passage, is incorrectly rendered "on the left hand *where he doth work*." The verb obviously refers to the speaker, and not to the Creator; and hence the Septuagint, more accurately, Αριστερα ποιησαντος αυτου. Yet, ποιησαντος does not give the full meaning of בָּעַשְׂתּוֹ, or rather, בעשתין which more precisely implies ελαφησα αυτον, ηφασαμην; and supposes a person to be feeling for an object in total darkness, or with a bandage before his eyes. Reiske is the only commentator I have met with, who enters into the complete spirit of the passage, and he renders it, as I have myself given it above, "*Ich hasche ihn*, oder, *ich greiffe nach ihm*." The Arabians still preserve the Hebrew term in the same sense: بعشه. It is to this passage, and in this explanation of it, St. Paul seems to refer, Acts, xvii. 27. "That they should seek after the Lord, if haply, while *feeling after him*, they might find him." Ειαρα γε ψηλαφησειαν αυτον και ευροιεν.

The latter period of the verse is more emphatically rendered, "he enshroudeth the right hand," or, "he wrappeth it up in darkness," than "he hideth himself," and is a happy continuation of the figure just introduced. The Hebrew term יעטף, in its primary signification, refers to the garments by which our limbs are covered or concealed,—and hence, secondarily, implies to *cloak*, *muffle*, or *enshroud*. In this instance, the Spanish exposition of Luis de Leon gives us the true sense, though it fails in interpreting the former member of the verse. "*Si à la izquierda, que haré? no le asiré: si à la derecha vuelvo, o le veré à él. O como el original à la letra: Izquierda en obrar suyo, y no le oteraré; en cubrir derecha, y no le veré.*"

† Ps. lxvii. 19.

בים דרכך
ושבילך במים רבים
ועקבתיך לאנודעו׃

Athenians: "whom, therefore," says he, "ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you *." It was about a century before St. Paul's visit to Athens, that Lucretius was studying in the same seat of philosophy and superstition; and, as there can be little doubt that this altar was at that time in existence, it is no extravagant conjecture that our poet himself had repeatedly noticed it, and had its inscription in his recollection when composing the passage before us.

It is absurd, therefore, to contend, that either Epicurus or his disciples were systematic atheists, since their precepts and practice, the writings both of themselves and their antagonists, establish a contrary position. It has again been said that whatever may have been their opinion respecting a Supreme Intelligence, they never believed him to have been concerned in the creation of the universe, which they expressly declared to have sprung from the fortuitous concurrence of insensible atoms, and hence to have been the mere result of blind and brutal chance.

Old as is the date of such an assertion, and widely as it has been circulated in every age, it appears to me to wander as remotely from the truth as the defamation I have just examined. I doubt much whether, if minutely analyzed, this ever were, or ever could be, the opinion of any philosopher, or of any philosophic school in the world. Of all the atomic teachers, Democritus appears to have approached nearest to such a position: yet, even Democritus himself did not contend that all atoms were insensible, and, consequently, that there was no intelligence whatever manifested in the creation of the world. His elementary corpuscles were divided into two classes, the intelligent and the non-intelligent, the power governing, and the power governed; and he contended, that it was by the common consultation and re-

* Acts, xvii. 23.

sult of the former, and the necessary submission of the latter, and not by the contingent effect of chance or fortune, that the universe sprang into existence. The absurdity of thus dividing the intelligent and creative power into parts, is too obvious to be dwelt upon; yet Democritus is not the only philosopher who is chargeable with this extravagant incongruity; for Aristotle and Plato are both guilty of the same error; since they both conceived the world, although manifestly a compound and divisible substance, to be eternal and intelligent as a whole. Far from coinciding, however, in any of these principles, Epicurus, and consequently Lucretius, opposed them with the utmost strength of their reasoning; and while they attempted to prove that matter, taken collectively, had no pretensions to sensation or consciousness, they asserted, at the same time, that it was no more capable of sense in its elementary, than in its collective state, and that every monad or primordial atom was alike intrinsically unintelligent and insensate. But this was not all: they expressly denied the existence of *Chance* or *Fortune*, either as a deity or a cause of action; and as positively asserted, that all the phænomena of the heavens, the alternation of the seasons, the eclipses of the planets, the return of day and night, are the effects of eternal and immutable laws established at the beginning, in the very origin and creation of all things. "Whom," says Epicurus, in a letter to Menæceus that has yet survived the ruthless hand of time, "do you believe to be more excellent than he who piously reveres the gods, who feels no dread of death, and rightly estimates the design of nature? Such a man does not, with the multitude, regard CHANCE as a God, for he knows that GOD *can never act at random*; nor as a *contingent cause* of events; nor does he conceive that from any such power flows the good, or the evil, that attempers the real happiness of human life *." And in another place, "think not that the different motions

* Τινα νομιζεις ειναι κρειττονα του και περι θεων ὁσια δοξαζοντος, και περι θανατου διαπαντος αφοβως εχοντος, και τον της φυσεως επιλελογισμενου τελος;— Την δε ΤΥΧΗΝ, ουτε θεον, ὡς οι πολλοι νομιζουσιν, ὑπολαμβανων, ουθεν γαρ ατακ-

and revolutions of the heavens, the rising, setting, eclipses, and other phænomena of the planets, are produced by the *immediate* control, superintendance, or ministration of him who possesses all immortality and beatitude; it is from immutable laws which they received at the beginning, in the creation of the universe, that they inflexibly fulfil their various circuits *." *Fortune*, *chance*, *accident*, are terms, indeed, which occur in the writings of Epicurean philosophers; but they occur also in writings the most sacred and unimpeachable; our established liturgy, the scriptures themselves, are not free from such expressions. We well know, that in these latter they are to be taken in their popular sense alone; Epicurus expressly tells us, that they are thus only to be understood under his own system; and in common justice, as well as common sense, we ought not therefore to understand them otherwise.

But it may be said, that Epicurus contended for the eternity of matter. He did so; yet this is a doctrine which by no means exclusively attaches itself to the Epicurean school. Perhaps, if closely investigated, there is not an individual sect of ancient philosophers, against whom the same charge cannot be substantiated. The Tuscans, indeed, are reported to have formed an exception to this universality of opinion; but we know so little of their cosmological tenets, and the

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των θεῳ πραττεται, ουτε αϊδεϐαιον αιτιαν, οιεται μεν γαρ αγαθον η κακον εκ ταυτης προς το μακαριως ζην ανθροποις μη διδοσθαι. Ad Menæc. Diog. Laert. lib. x. p. 659. Ed. West.

* Εν τοις μετεωροις, φοραν, και τροπην, και εκλειψιν, και ανατολην, και δυσιν, και τα συστοιχα τουτοις, μητε λειτουργουντος τινος νομιζειν δει γινεσθαι, και διαταττοντος, η διαταξαντος, και ἁμα την πασαν μακαριοτητα εχοντος μετ' αφθαρσιας.—Ὁθεν δη κατα τας εξ αρχης εναπολειφεις των συστροφων τουτων εν τη του κοσμου γενεσει, δει δοξαζειν, και την αναγκην ταυτην και περιοδον συντελεισθαι. Id. p. 635.

It is probable that Piscator had his eye directed to this passage of Epicurus when he wrote the following, which is perfectly in unison with it. "*In consideratione meteorum*, ut tonitrui, fulguris, pluviæ, nivis, ventorum, non debemus subsistere in investigatione *causarum secundarum*, *et naturalium*, sed mentes attollere ad Deum, ut qui illa potentissime sapientissimeque et *creat et gubernat*, ut inde majestatem ejus itemque justitiam et bonitatem cognoscamus. In Job. cap. xxxvii.

little we do know, appears to be so loose and indefinite, that we have no satisfactory datum from which to draw a conclusion. The present day itself, and even the Christian church, is not without espousers of the same doctrine; nor were the Hebrew theologians uniformly free from attachment to it. The short narrative of the creation given by Moses seems to leave the question undecided, as he evidently speaks proleptically, and intimates the existence of matter in a chaotic state anterior to the formation of the world; consistently with which, the author of the Book of Wisdom asserts, in the most express manner possible, that "*the almighty hand* of the Lord *created the world out of unfashioned matter* *." I ought, nevertheless, to observe that Maimonides contended that the Hebrew term ברא (*created*) as employed by Moses, in Genesis i. 1, implies, of itself, an absolute *creation out of nothing*; and that Origen, who followed the same opinion, objected to the above proposition contained in the Wisdom of Solomon, as issuing from a book which is not universally admitted to form a part of canonical scripture. Philo †, however, as well as the greater part of the Christian fathers ‡, are well known to have coincided in the sentiment expressed in the latter book; and Justin Martyr directly affirms it to have been the common belief of his own æra, that the Creator of the world *formed it out of unfashioned matter* §; in which respect, says he, Moses, the Platonists, and ourselves, are all agreed, "that the whole world was created, by the word of God, out of plastic matter, (as asserted by Moses,) Plato and his adherents affirm, and ourselves have been taught to believe ‖." The grand motive for such a dogma appears to have been a supposed absurdity in conceiving that any

* Ἡ παντοδυναμος σου χειρ, και κτισασα τον κοσμον εξ αμορφου ὑλης. Cap. xi. 17.

† Cosmog. vol. i. p. 5. Nov. Ed.

‡ Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen.

§ Παντα, την αρχην, αγαθον οντα δημιουργησαι αυτον εξ αμορφου ὑλης, δ. ανθροπους, διδιδαγμεθα. Apol. i. 10.

‖ Ὡστε λογω Θεου εκ των ὑποκειμενων, και προδηλωθεντων δια Μωσεως, γεγενησθαι τον παντα κοσμον, και Πλατων και οι ταυτα λεγοντες, ως ἡμεις εμαθομεν. Just. Mart. c. lix. p. 78.

thing could be created out of nothing. The Epicureans, and many other schools of philosophers, who borrowed it from them, perpetually appeal to this position. It originated, perhaps, with Democritus, who expressly asserted, according to Diogenes Laertius, "that nothing could spring from nothing, or could ever return to nothing *." Epicurus echoed the tenet in the following terms: "Know first of all, that nothing can spring from non-entity †." It was thus given by Aristotle: "To suppose what is created to have been created from nothing, is to divest it of all power; for it is a dogma of those who thus pretend to think that every thing must still possess its own nature ‡." From the Greeks it passed to the Romans, and appears as follows, in Lucretius:

> Admit this truth that nought from nothing springs,
> And all is clear §.

And it was thus, long afterwards, recorded by Persius:

> Nought springs from nought, and can to nought return ‖.

It is singular, that the very same reason is advanced among the Bramins, and is thus urged, in identic terms, in an Upanishad, from the Yajur Veda, in the course of an address to Bremah, or the Supreme Being: "the ignorant assert, that the universe, in the beginning, did not exist in its author, and that it was created out of nothing. O ye whose hearts are pure, *how could something arise out of nothing* ¶?"

* Μηδεν εκ του μη οντος γινεσθαι, μηδε εις το μη ον φθειρεσθαι. L. ix. 44. † Ὁτι ουδεν γινεται εκ του μη οντος. Diog. Laert. x. 38. ‡ Το γιγνομενον εκ μη οντων γιγνεσθαι, αδυνατον· περι γαρ ταυτης ὁμολογω μονοισι της δοξης παντες οι περι Φυσεως. Phys. l. i. 3.

§ ——ubi viderimus nihil posse creari
De nihilo, tum, quod sequimur, jam rectius inde
Perspiciemus. L. i. 157.

‖ ——gigni
De nihilo nil, in nihilum nil posse reverti. iii. 83.

¶ I quote from M. Anquetil du Perron's Latin version. The reader may find other similar extracts in Sir Wm. Jones's Works, vol. vi.

Let it not be conceived, however, that I hereby enter into the justification of this tenet. In shewing the degree of its universality, I only mean to contend, that whatever be its opprobrium with respect to religion, or its inconsequence with respect to ratiocination, the Epicureans are not more guilty than the greater part of ancient, and several modern, philosophers. There are three systems which have been alternately advanced to avoid the supposed absurdity of the proposition thus universally appealed to, "that nothing can proceed from nothing," or, in other words, that the world was produced by an eternal and intelligent power from non-entity; yet they all, if I mistake not, plunge us into an absurdity ten times more deep and inextricable. The first is that contended for by all the old atomic schools, that matter is, in itself, necessarily and essentially eternal. But by such a dogma we are put into possession of two co-eternal, co-existent, and independent principles, destitute of all relative connexion, and common medium of action. The second, which has had even more espousers than the first, asserts, that the universe is an expansion of the essence of the Supreme Creator. But under this belief, the Creator himself becomes material, or in other words, matter itself becomes the Creator, a doctrine not only very generally advanced by former philosophers, but lately revived and re-accredited on the continent*, although far more irrational than the atomic creed. The third hypothesis is that of the idealists; to wit, that there is no such thing as a material or external world; that the existence of man consists of nothing more than impressions and ideas, or of pure incorporeal spirit which surveys every thing in the same insubstantial manner as the visions of a dream. Germany has still some advocates for this tenet; the Kantian philosophy, or as the professor at Königsburg prefers it should be called, the Criticism of Pure Reason, has an obvious inclina-

* See note on Book I. v. 168. of the ensuing poem.

tion to it*; but its boldest advocates, at least in modern days, were our own countrymen, Berkeley and Hume.

But, after all, why is it an absurdity to suppose that something may spring from nothing, when the proposition is applied to omnipotence? I may be answered, perhaps, because it is a self-contradiction. But this is only to argue *in circulo*, for why is it a self-contradiction? "It is impossible," said M. Leibnitz, "for a thing to be, and not to be, at the same time." This position I admit, because the contrary would imply a self-contradiction absolute and universal, founded upon the very nature of things, and consequently impossible to be performed by Omnipotence itself. But the position that "nothing can spring from nothing," is of a very different character:—it is true when applied to man, but it does not follow that it is true when applied to God. Instead of being *absolute* and *universal*, it is *relative* and *limited*; the nature of things does not allow us to reason from it when its reference is to the latter; and hence, we have no authority to say that it is impossible to the Deity, or to maintain that an absolute creation out of nothing is an absurdity and self-contradiction. It is absurd to suppose that matter does not exist; it is absurd to suppose that it does exist eternally and independently of the Creator; it is absurd to suppose that it constitutes the Creator himself: but as it is not absurd to suppose its absolute formation out of nothing by the exercise of almighty power, and as one of these four propositions must necessarily be true, reason should induce us to embrace the last with the same promptitude with which we reject the other three.

So far, indeed, from intimating any absurdity in the idea, that matter may be created out of nothing by the interposition of an almighty

* Critique de la Raison Pure, p. 9. See also, M. Kiesweter's Versuch einer fasslichen Darstellung der Wahrheiten der neuern Philosophie, fur Uneingeweyte. Berlin, 1798.

intelligence, reason seems, on the contrary, rather to point out to us the possibility of an equal creation out of nothing of ten thousand other substances, of which each may be the medium of life and happiness to infinite orders of beings, while *every one* may, at the same time, be as distinct from *every one*, as the whole may be from matter, or as matter is from what, without knowing any thing farther of, we commonly denominate spirit. Spirit, as generally used among modern metaphysicians, is, to say the most of it, but a mere negative term, employed to express something that is not matter; but there may be ten thousand somethings, and substrata of being, and moral excellence and felicity, which are not matter, none of which, however, we can otherwise characterise. Yet why, between all, or any one of these, and matter itself, there should be such an utter opposition and discrepancy as was contended for by Des Cartes, and has since been maintained by most metaphysicians, I cannot possibly conjecture; nor conceive why it should be so universally thought necessary, as it still appears to be thought, that the essence of the eternal Creator himself must indispensably consist of the essence of some one of the orders of beings whom he has created. Why may it not be as distinct from that of an archangel, as from that of a mortal? from the whole of those various substances, which I have just supposed, and which we cannot otherwise contemplate, or characterise, than by the negative term spirit, as it is from matter which is more immediately submitted to our eyes, and constitutes the substratum of our own being and sensations?

But I return to the subject before me: and repeat it, that my intention, instead of defending the erroneous doctrine of Epicurus respecting the eternity of matter, has been merely to prove that, in erring, he only erred with the greater part of the world at large, and upon a point which it would be absurd and dogmatic to affirm is pos-

sessed of no difficulties whatever. In other respects, the doctrine he inculcated was perfectly coincident with the creed of almost every modern geologist, whether Plutonic or Neptunian *, and which has been gradually gaining ground from the age of Des Cartes; I mean, that matter which was originally possessed of the mere qualities of extent and solidity, was endowed, by the Supreme Creator, with such additional properties of motion and gravitation, as enabled it, in process of time, after a long lapse of intervening ages, and an infinite reiteration of collisions, repulsions, and re-combinations, to produce, by the mere effect of such superadded powers alone, from a rude and undigested chaos, a vital and harmonious world.

An examination into the internal structure of the earth demonstrates, that such must have been the fact; and the Neptunian philosopher, or he who traces the origin of things from an aqueous, instead of an igneous, or Plutonic chaos, perceives, from the very lineaments of nature herself, the truth of the Mosaic narrative; he perceives, that the present arrangement and phænomena of the chaotic mass were not educed instantaneously, but by a series of separate and creative operations; that the different fluids of vapour and water were secerned in the first instance; that the water, for a considerable portion of time, must have covered the entire surface of the globe; that it at length gradually subsided, and disclosed the summits of our primary, or granitic mountains, which contain no organic remains, and, of course, must have existed anterior to all animal, or even vegetable life. He perceives, from the book of nature, that the waters were first animated with living creatures, the shells and exuviæ of marine animals being traced in immense quantities, even to the present moment, on the summits of the loftiest and most inland primary mountains, whence it is certain that they existed, and in prodigious shoals, even prior to

* Werner, La Metherie, Des Saussures, Hutton, Whitehurst, Kirwan, Playfair.

the subsidence of the waters, and the disclosure of the dry land. He, without difficulty, can conceive, still pursuing the order of the sacred historian, which is in every respect analogous with that of the Epicurean system *, and he is supported in such conception by the best principles of ornithology,—that, the summits of the primary mountains being covered with the verdure of the grassy herb, as the waters progressively retreated the atmosphere was next inhabited; and that the different genera of birds—many of which have long since become extinct, and perhaps existed but for a short period from the date of the general creation, but whose skeletons are still occasionally detected on the surface, or but a little below the surface of our loftiest hills—drew their nutriment from the summits of these primary mountains, as soon as they began to be disclosed, and to be furnished with herbaceous food, being the only animals, excepting fishes, which hitherto possessed a habitation. It follows of necessity, therefore, as stated in the sacred writings, and as is expressly affirmed in the poem before us †, that terrestrial animals must have had a posterior creation, the surface of the earth now gradually assuming a more solid and extensive appearance, and accommodating them with an augmenting theatre of existence. The Mosaic account, indeed, limits this process to a period in which, if the terms be understood in their strict and literal sense, the existing phænomena of nature seem to evince they could not possibly have occurred; for it confines the entire work of creation within the compass of *six days*. In other parts of the scriptures, however, we have undeniable proofs, that the term *day*, instead of being restrained to a single revolution of the earth around its axis, is used, in a looser and more general sense, for a definite, indeed, but a much more extensive period; and we have as ample a proof from the book of nature, the existing face of the earth, that the six days or periods of creation referred to, in the Mosaic cosmology, imply epochs of much greater duration than so many diurnal revolutions, as we have, in the

* See Nature of Things, Book V. 818. † Ibid. 822.

page of human history, that the same terms were employed with the same laxity of meaning by the prophet Daniel. Thus interpreted, scepticism is driven from her last and inmost fortress; every subterfuge is annihilated, and the word and work of the Deity are in perfect unison with each other. That the Creator might have produced the whole by a single and instantaneous effort, is not to be denied; but, as both revelation and nature concur in asserting that such was not the fact, it is no more derogatory to him, with whom a thousand years are but as one day, and one day as a thousand years, to suppose that he allotted six thousand years to the completion of his design than that he executed it in six days. And, surely, there is something far more magnificent in conceiving the world to have progressively attained form, order, and vitality, from the mere operation of powers communicated to it in a state of chaos, or unfashioned matter, than in supposing the actual and persevering exertions of the Almighty for a definite, although a shorter period of time *.

That Epicurus and his disciples disbelieved a future state, is a fact that I pretend not to deny. Whence were they to acquire a knowledge of this important doctrine? The evidences offered in its favour by nature, and the reflection of our own minds when directed to moral considerations, are, at best, but feeble and inconclusive; and if the Jews themselves, the only people at this period who were favoured with a revelation of any kind, hesitated upon this mysterious subject, and the Sadducees, a large and considerable body of them openly rejected it; if Solomon himself, renowned through every æra as the profoundest sage of his nation, believed that the wise or righteous man died even as the fool or the wicked †; that "that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts, even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth so dieth the other; yea, they have all one spirit; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast, for all is vanity: all go unto one place;

* See Note on Book I. ver. 168. of the Nature of Things. † Eccles. ii. 16.

all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again *;" it surely can be no impeachment of the wisdom or virtue of a sect of heathen philosophers, that, after a full and critical examination of this momentous point, they could not bring themselves to accredit what was professedly denied by men who were in possession of an express revelation from heaven.

The belief of a future existence can only result from that of a resurrection of the body after its dissolution, or of the survival of the soul as a separate and independent principle. With respect to the former, although intermixed with a multitude of the grossest conceits imaginable, it became an early tenet among the Egyptians, and was strenuously contended for by the Pharisaic Jews, it made little or no progress in either Greece or Rome at any time; and hence, when St. Paul, with inimitable eloquence, asserted this sublime doctrine at the bar of Agrippa's court, Festus accused him of being mad from excess of learning †. "That the dead shall rise, and live again," observes Mr. Locke, "is beyond the discovery of reason, and is purely a matter of faith ‡:" the knowledge of immortality is alone brought to light by the gospel; and nothing but the irrefragable proofs we possess of our Saviour's resurrection can afford us, at the present moment, any full or decisive evidence upon the subject.

Of the separate survival of the soul, we know as little from any intimations afforded by the light of nature, as we do concerning the resurrection of the body. And hence, though the former was a tenet far more widely acceded to than the latter, it appears to have been

* Eccles. iii. 19, 20. The belief of a future state among the Hebrews does not, indeed, appear to have been general even in the days of Hezekiah, whose reign commenced, at least, three centuries after that of Solomon; for, in his prayer to the Almighty for a prolongation of life, Isai. xxxviii. 18, 19. he expressly asserts, that *death* cannot celebrate Jehovah—that those who go down to the grave, are *without hope*—and that the living alone can praise him.

† Acts, xxvi. 23, 24. ‡ Human Understand. iv. 2.

derived from no common foundation, nor possessed of any uniformity of conception. Generally speaking, moreover, the tenet itself was destroyed by the mode in which it was explained. What was the nature of the soul, in the opinion of those who contended for its incorruptibility? An emanation from the divine and universal mind *—a particle of the divine aura †, an idea ‡, an æon §. How was it disposed of, upon its separation from the body? It transmigrated into some other body; it remigrated to the soul of the world ‖; it was resorbed by the divine universal Mind. But in either case, the soul is possessed of no *separate entity*, and as much ceases to exist *per se*, or to be what it was before, as if it perished with the body, and returned to the common mass of the material world. We cannot wonder, therefore, that, even among the Stoics and Platonists, the doctrine of a post-existence of the soul appeared to be frequently doubtful and undecided. They believed, and they disbelieved; they hoped, and they feared; and life passed away in a state of perpetual anxiety and agitation. But this was not all: perplext, even when they admitted the doctrine, about the will of the Deity, and the mode of securing his favour after death, with their own philosophic speculations they intermixed the religion of the people. They acknowledged the existence of the popular divinities; cloathed them with the attributes of the Eternal himself; and, anxious to obtain their benediction, were punctilious in attending at their temples, and united in the sacrifices that were offered. Such was the conduct of the most worthy and the most enlightened; of Socrates ¶ and of Plato **, of Cicero †† and Seneca ‡‡.

* Ex divina mente universa delibutos animos habemus. Cic. in Cat. Maj.

† ——affigit humo divinæ particulam auræ. Hor. Sat. ii. 5.

‡ Plut. contr. Gnost. ii. 9. § Jambl. Myst. Egypt. viii. 1.

‖ Thus Plutarch, in allusion to the destiny of the soul, as maintained both by Pythagoras and Plato, εις την του παντος ψυχην αναχωρειν προς το ὁμογενες. Placit. iv. 9.

¶ Xenoph. Mem. l. i. Diog. Laert. l. ii. ** De Legib. l. viii. †† Appian. Plut. in Cic. ‡‡ Tacit. l. xv. Suet. in Ner.

An incorruptible soul, however, being thus generally conceived to constitute a portion of the human frame, it became, from a very early period, necessary to inquire into the part it was destined to perform while connected with the body. And from its being admitted on all hands, by those who denied, as well as by those who contended for its incorruptibility, to be of a more volatile and attenuate nature than the body properly so called, it required no great degree of acuteness to appropriate to it, as its peculiar prerogative, the principle of thought and consciousness; or to maintain consecutively, that thought or consciousness could not result from pure elementary matter under any combination. It is commonly imagined that this latter tenet was the foundation of the former; but whoever examines the history of mankind will perceive that the idea of an immortal or incorruptible soul was very generally accredited for ages before the science of metaphysics or psychology was heard of, or even conceived; and the parent is hence transmuted into the offspring.

Such was the general belief in the age of Epicurus, and such it continued to be in the time of Lucretius; and hence it was necessary to reduce the doctrine to the crucible of minute examination and experiment, in order to ascertain its veracity. This each of them appears to have done with a precision that scarcely leaves a wish ungratified, and the result is, admitting their reasoning to be correct, that the frame of man is simple, uncompounded matter; that matter, in its gross and cruder state, composes the body, and in its more refined or gaseous, the soul or spirit,

> That rears th' incipient stimulus, and first
> Darts sentient motion through the quivering frame *.

Has modern science added any thing to this discovery, or rests the question as handed down to us in the pages of Lucretius? The Chris-

* Nature of Things, Book iii. ver. 284.

tian scriptures, I admit, which have brought *life*, as well as *immortality*, to light, the *present nature* of man, as well as his *future destiny*, teach us, in my apprehension, most clearly and unequivocally, not only that the body will arise from the grave, but that the soul will exist antecedently to such an event in a state of separation. In this respect, therefore, the Epicurean were more estranged from the truth than their opponents, or rather the phænomena of nature, in which they implicitly confided, afforded them no direct evidence upon the subject, and tended to a contrary conclusion: but so far as relates to the constitution of the entire man, to the materiality of the soul itself, the indications of nature, and their own deductions, appear to have been equally correct, and by no means to be contradicted by revelation. To render the soul immortal, why is it necessary that it should be immaterial? *Immaterial* is a term that does not occur in the scriptures: it has been introduced in aid of reason alone; and it has, unquestionably, engendered more perplexity than its fondest advocates ever flattered themselves it would remove. Perception, consciousness, cognition, we continue to be told, are qualities which cannot appertain to matter; there must hence be a thinking, and an immaterial principle, and man must still be a compound being.

Yet why thus degrade matter, the plastic and prolific creature of the Deity, beyond what we are authorised to do? Why may it not perceive, why not think, why not become conscious? What eternal and necessary impediment prevents? or what self-contradiction and absurdity is hereby implied? Let us examine nature, as she presents herself to us in her most simple and unorganized forms; let us trace her through her gradual and ascending stages of power and perfection.

Matter is denominated inert and brutish: as an individual monad or atom, however, and placed at an infinite distance from all other

atoms, can it alone deserve such an appellation, if it deserve it under any circumstances. Admit the existence of two or more atoms, and whatever be the distance at which they are placed from each other, they will begin to act with reciprocity; diminish the distance, and the action will be sensible; the power of gravitation will obviously exert itself; they will approximate, they will unite. In its simplest form, therefore, matter evinces the desire of reciprocal union, or, as it is commonly called, the attraction of gravitation. Increase its mass, arrange it in other modifications, and it immediately evinces other powers or attractions——and these will be perpetually, and almost infinitely, varied, in proportion as we vary its combinations. If arranged, therefore, in one mode, it discloses the power of magnetism; in another, that of electricity, or galvanism; in a third, that of chemical affinities; in a fourth, that of mineral assimilations, of which the very beautiful *flos ferri* affords us a striking example. Pursue its modifications into classes of a more complex, or rather, perhaps, of a more gaseous, or attenuate nature, and it will evince the power of vegetable, or fibrous irritability; ascend through the classes of vegetables, and you will, at length, reach the strong stimulative perfection, the palpable vitality of the mimosa pudica, or the hedysarum gyrans, the former of which shrinks from the touch with the most bashful coyness, while the latter perpetually dances beneath the jocund rays of the sun. And when we have thus attained the summit of vegetable powers and vegetable life, it will require, I think, no great stretch of the imagination to conceive, that the fibrous irritability of animals, as well as vegetables, is the mere result of a peculiar arrangement of simple and unirritable material atoms.

But let us not trust to conjecture; let us mark the progress of nature through the animal kingdom, as well as through the vegetable, and trace the first doubtful and evanescent symptoms of incipient percep-

tion and spirit. The seeds of plants possess no irritability whatever; yet nothing but an evolution or augmentation, a mere change and increased organization, are sufficient to produce this new and higher power. It is precisely the same with animals. The fecundated egg of a hen, or other bird, when first laid, is as destitute of all irritability as the acorn of an oak-tree; the mother nourishes it with heat, and the embryon chick expands in growth, and becomes susceptible of new faculties, till, at length, it bursts its inclosure, and the senseless embryon speck is transmuted into an active and perfect animal. The mother, however, after she has deposited her egg, communicates nothing but heat; for the warmth of an oven would have answered the purpose as well as that of her own body; and, in many countries, the former is preferred to the latter. The same fact occurs with respect to viviparous animals; for, whatever be the theory of generation we may adopt, the first filaments of the fetus, although formed within the body, are as destitute of sensation as the first fibres that pullulate from the seed or egg after its discharge from the parent stock: and hence the aphis, and some other animals, are possessed of a double power of propagating their young according to the season of the year; in the spring-time producing them oviparously, and viviparously in the summer. Hence then, animal sensation, and, hence, necessarily and consequently, ideas and a material soul or spirit; rude and confined indeed in its first and simplest mode of existence, but like every other production of nature, beautifully and progressively advancing from power to power, from faculty to faculty, from excellence to excellence, till it at length terminate in the perfection of the human mind.

Such appears to be the clear indication and gradual progress of nature, and such was the doctrine of Epicurus. But such was not the whole of his doctrine. He pursued the mind into her inmost recesses; he analyzed her powers, and endeavoured to develope her very tex-

ture, as distinguished from the external and grosser body. To enter minutely into this subject would occupy far too much space, and I refer the reader, therefore, to the following poem, Book III. v. 100—265. and the explanatory notes which will be found appended. Let it at present suffice to observe, that the mind was supposed to be the result of a combination of the most volatile and ethereal auras or gasses, diffused over the whole body, though traced in a more concentrate form in some organs than in others. Nor could any conception be more correct or happy: it is the very philosophy of the present day, boldly predicted and accurately ascertained. Such, from the clearest and most convincing experiments, are the sources of all nervous communication; and why may not a certain modification of such gasses constitute the mind itself, and form the very texture of that separate state of existence which the infallible page of revelation clearly indicates will be ours? Analogy, I admit, points out to us, as it did to Epicurus and his disciples, that such a texture can be no more incorruptible, than the less subtilized body itself, which is avowedly doomed to the grave; and it may moreover be questioned, whether a frame so attenuate be capable either of organization, or permanent endurance. As the suggestions of analogy, however, are erroneous with respect to the body, we can place no dependence upon them with regard to the mind, admitting it to be material in its frame. Matter is not *necessarily* corruptible under any form. The body, which is now mouldering in its grave, will hereafter experience a glorious resurrection; the corruptible will put on incorruption; the mortal, immortality. As then the material body is privileged to enjoy incorruptibility in a future period, so may the material mind be privileged to enjoy it from its birth. Why it should be requisite for that which seems to constitute one harmonious whole to separate, and for the mind to exist by itself in an intermediate state of being, is a mystery which equally attaches to the material and immaterial systems. But the power that is capable of giving personality and consciousness to matter in its grosser and more palpable form,

must unquestionably possess a similar power of bestowing the same qualities on matter in its most attenuate and evanescent.

This opinion, however, I offer as a speculation to be pursued, rather than as a doctrine to be precipitately accredited *. Yet its tendency is by no means idle or unimportant: since, if capable of establishment, it will, in a considerable degree, remove the objections which attach to the common systems of materialism, elucidate the Mosaic account of the first creation of the soul from a divine *breath* or *aura* infused into the body, and give stability to universal tradition, by developing the nature of that evanescent and shadowy texture, under which, among all nations, the soul has ever been supposed to exist. Opposed as the two theories of materialism (in the manner in which it is commonly professed) and immaterialism are to each other, it is curious to observe how directly and equally they tend to one common result with respect to a point upon which they are supposed to differ diametrically: I mean, an assimilation of the human soul to that of the brute. The materialist, who traces the origin of sensation and thought from a mere modification of matter, refers the perception, cognition, and reflection of brutes, to the very same principle which produces such endowments in man; and believing that this modification is equally, in both instances, destroyed by death, maintains like Solomon, that "as the one dieth, so dieth the other; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast:" and his hope of a future existence depends exclusively upon the resurrection of the human body, as positively predicted in the Christian scriptures. The immaterialist, on the contrary, who conceives that mere matter is incapable, under any modification, of producing the effect of sensation and ideas, is under the necessity of supposing the existence of another and a very different substance in a state of combination with it: a sub-

* The subject will be found farther investigated in a new theory of physiology which the author shortly intends to submit to the public.

stance not subject to the changes and infirmities of matter, and altogether impalpable and incorruptible. But if sensation and ideas can only result from such a substance in man, they can only result from a possession of the same substance by brutes: and hence the level between the two is equally maintained by both parties, the common materialist lowering the man to the brute, and the immaterialist exalting the brute to the man. The immaterialist, however, on the approach of dissolution, finds a difficulty to which his antagonist is not subject, for he knows not, at that period, how to dispose of the brutal soul: he cannot destroy an incorruptible and immaterial substance, and yet he cannot bring himself to a belief that it is immortal. This difficulty is extreme, and no system that has hitherto been invented has been able to surmo[illegible] By some immaterialists, and particularly by Vitringa and Gr[illegible] a clea[illegible] s been conceived, that as something distinct from matter m[illegible] granted to brutes to account for their powers of perception, man[illegible] are in possession of a principle superadded to this, and which alone constitutes their immortal spirit; but such an idea, while it absurdly supposes every man to be created with two immaterial spirits instead of one, leaves us as much as ever in the dark as to the one immaterial, and, consequently, incorruptible soul or principle possessed by brutes. The insufficiency of the solution has not only been felt but acknowledged by other immaterialists, and nothing can silence the objection, but to advance boldly, and deny that brutes have a soul or percipient principle of any kind; that they have either thought, perception, or sensation; and to maintain, in consequence, that they are mere mechanical machines, acted upon by external impulsions alone. Des Cartes was sensible that this was the only alternative; he, therefore, cut the Gordian knot, and strenuously contended for such a theory: and Polignac, who intrepidly follows him, gravely devotes almost a whole book of his Anti-Lucretius to the elucidation of this doctrine; maintaining,

that the hound has no more will of his own in chasing the fox or the hare, than the wires of a harpsichord have in the excitation of tones; and that, as the latter is mechanically thrown into action by the pressure of the fingers upon the keys, so the hound is mechanically driven forwards by the pressure of the stimulating odour that exhales from the body of the fox or hare upon his nostrils *. Such are the fancies which have been invented, to explain what appears to elude all explanation whatever, and, consequently, to prove that the original theory itself is unfounded.

Yet the objections that apply to the theory of materialism, as *commonly* understood and professed, are still greater. By the denial of an intermediate state of being between the two periods of death and the resurrection of the body, it opposes what appears to be, not only the general tenor, but, in some instances, the direct declarations of the Christian Scriptures †: and by conceiving the entire dissolution and dispersion of the animal machine, of which all the atoms may become afterwards constituent portions of other intelligent beings, it renders a future and resumed personality almost, if not altogether, impossible. The idea I have thrown out seems to avoid the difficulties attached to both systems. It says to the materialist, matter is not *necessarily* corruptible: you admit that it is not so, upon your own principle, which strenuously asserts, that the body itself will, hereafter, arise incorruptible and immutable. It says to the immaterialist, the term *immaterial* is the mere creature of system, at the same time that it by no means answers the purpose of its creation: it tells him that it is a term not to be found in the scriptures, which, so far from discountenancing a belief that the soul, spirit, or immortal part of man, is a system of gaseous or etherial matter, seem rather to authorize such a conception by expressly

* Anti-Lucr. l. vi. 640.

† Matt. x. 28. Luke, xvi. 22, 23. id. xxiii. 43. Acts, vii. 59. 2 Cor. v. 1. 6. 8, 9. Phil. i. 21—24. 1 Peter, iii. 18. 20. 2 Peter, i. 13, 14.

asserting that it was originally formed from an air or aura, which was breathed into the body of Adam, in consequence of which he became a living soul, and by presenting it to us under some such modification in every instance in which the dead are stated to have re-appeared.

In reality, the difference between this hypothesis and that of immaterialists, in general, is little more than merely verbal. For, there are few of them who do not conceive that the soul, in its separate state, exists under some such shadowy and evanescent form, and that, if never suffered to make its appearance in the present day, it has thus occasionally, appeared in earlier times, and for particular purposes. Yet, what can in this manner become palpable to material senses must itself be material in its texture, otherwise it could produce no impression on the external organs, and must for ever remain impalpable and imperceptible : a similar texture of existence seems, therefore, to be presupposed by both systems; and the only discrepancy between them is, that while the one denominates it *material*, the other, but I think less accurately, denominates it *immaterial*. From what source universal tradition may have derived the same idea of disembodied spirits I pretend not to ascertain ; the inquiry would, nevertheless, be curious, and might be rendered important : its universality, independently of the sanction afforded to it by revealed religion, is no small presumption of its being founded on fact. My only object, in this digression, has been to conciliate discordant opinions, and to connect popular belief with philosophy.

But to return to the subject before me. I have already observed, that the Epicureans were addicted to religious abstractions, and that the great founder of the sect composed various treatises upon the duties of piety and holiness. These, according to Cicero, were possessed

of an ardour and enthusiasm which would have become a priest * ; and it has hence been inquired what could be so absurd as to recommend piety, and engage in devotional exercises, if the soul be not immortal, if there be no resurrection of the body, and the Deity interfere not with moral actions lest the human will be curtailed in its liberty ? This question has been proposed often ; and the adversaries of Epicurus have maliciously replied to it, that he was only influenced to such a conduct by a fear of offending the civil power. It is impossible, however, to form a more false conjecture of his motives, nor can any one give credit to such reply for an instant, who is acquainted with the magnanimity he evinced throughout every stage of his life ; the fortitude with which he opposed the prevailing superstitions of the people, and the simplicity of his own religious tenets. " We are accustomed," observes Gassendi, upon this very point, " to assign two causes why mankind should worship the Deity : the one is, his own excellent and supreme nature ; and the other, the benefits he is continually conferring upon us by restraining us from evil, or vouchsafing to us some positive good †." It was then, by the former, and the far purer of these motives, by which Epicurus was actuated. Seneca, indeed, expressly tells us so : " He worshiped God," says he, " induced by no hope, by no reward, but on account of his most excellent Majesty, and Supreme Nature alone ‡." " And why should we not," inquires Bayle, " allow to Epicurus the idea of a worship which our most orthodox theologians recommend as the most legitimate and the most perfect ? For they preach to us, from day to day, that though there should be no paradise to hope for, and no hell to dread, we should, nevertheless, be obliged to honour God, and to do whatever

* De Nat. Deor. l. i. 41. † Duplicem solemus assignare causam, quare Deum homines colant, unam dicimus excellentem, supremamque Dei naturam ; alteram beneficia, &c. lib. iii. c. 4.

‡ Deum colebat nulla spe, nullo pretio inductus ; sed propter majestatem ejus eximiam, supremamque ejus naturam. De Benefic. lib. iv. cap. 19.

we think agreeable to his nature *." But, independently of these considerations, the devotional services of the Epicureans carried a positive and physical benefit along with them. By occasional abstractions from the world, all undue attachment to it was diminished, if not totally eradicated; and by confirming themselves, during these periods of retirement, in a calm and confidential resignation to the determined series of events, they obtained a complete victory over their passions, and gave the truest enjoyment to life.

What, then, is there so much worse, so much more impious, in the tenets of Lucretius and Epicurus, than in those of their contemporaries? That we of the present day are possessed of more knowledge and illumination, upon the important doctrine of a future life, should be a source of continual thankfulness,—and a stimulus to superior virtue. The advantages they enjoyed, however, they improved as far as they were able: let us in this respect, at least, follow their example,—and go and do likewise.

But to revert to the life of our poet. In the midst of his retirement, Lucretius did not enjoy all that undisturbed tranquillity which he had fondly painted to his imagination. He had retreated from the storms and tumults of a public life, but he could not become indifferent to the welfare of his country. His eyes seem to have been frequently wandering back to those busy scenes where so many of his ancestors had signalized themselves for wisdom and patriotic virtue: and the disturbances which the ambition of the triumvirs had introduced into the Senate, and the disputes between Clodius and Milo into the forum; the venality so flagrantly discovered in elections to every public

* Pourquoi ne voudrions nous pas qu'Epicure ait en l'idee d'un culte, que nos theologiens les plus orthodoxes recommandent, comme le plus legitime, et le plus parfait. Ils nous disent tous les jours que quand on n'auroit ni le paradis à esperer, ni l'enfer à craindre, l'on seroit pourtant obligé d'honorer Dieu, et de faire tout ce que l'on croiroit lui être agreeable. Art. Epicure.

office, whether of quæstors, prætors, tribunes, or consuls; the unprincipled and traitorous conduct of Pompey, who maintained an army devoted to his own interest, at the very gates of the city; the general insurrection in Gaul, and the unsuccessful expedition against the Parthians, are said to have preyed severely upon his heart. While, at the same time, to complete his affliction, his beloved friend, Caius Memmius, who, by the advice, and with all the influence of Julius Cæsar, had just before offered himself a candidate for the consulate, but had been obliged to yield to the superior interest and artifices of Pompey, was attacked with a charge of bribery and corruption, under a law which had lately been proposed by Cato, and sanctioned, with difficulty, in the comitia, and which provided that every one, against whom such a charge could be substantiated, should be banished from the republic for life.

That Memmius was guilty upon this occasion can scarcely admit of a doubt: the whole republic was become corrupt, and Cato, whose intention in the proposition of this law was principally directed against Pompey and Cæsar, acquired equally the hatred of the rich and the poor for his interference. Neither did the law itself, in any respect, answer the purpose of its virtuous projector; for the people and the Senate, instead of being openly and individually bought up as heretofore, were now only bargained for more privately in the lump, through the medium of the existing consuls and tribunes. On the present occasion, the disturbances were unquestionably very great:—the candidates were numerous, the different factions were powerful; and the tribunes themselves, not knowing which party to embrace, procrastinated the meeting till the time of the writ was expired, and then dissolved the assembly without any determinate issue. Hence ensued an interregnum which lasted for seven months, during the whole of which period Pompey employed the full extent of his influence and address to be elected into the supreme office of dictator;

but finding that the party of Memmius, and the other candidates for the still vacant consulate, were too powerful for this utmost gratification of his ambition, he artfully lowered his pretensions, and had interest enough to obtain the consulate for two dependents upon him, Domitius Calvinus and Valerius Messala. This point being secured, his next object was to glut his vengeance upon those who had precluded him from becoming dictator: Caius Memmius, and various others, were hence arraigned at his instigation before the comitia, upon the charge of bribery I have just adverted to; and though little doubt remains that Pompey himself was the most corrupt man in the court, Memmius was declared guilty, and sentenced to a banishment into Greece *. Cicero, upon this occasion, returned the friendship he had so lately received, and pleaded with all his ability for the accused; but the most splendid talents must prove fruitless where the cause is predetermined. It was, probably, in the power of Cæsar to have turned the balance against the consuls themselves: but Cæsar never consulted any other interest than his own, and he had indubitably as powerful a motive for coinciding with Pompey at this time, as he had for opposing him in the year preceding.

The warm and sympathetic soul of Lucretius, however, was unable to sustain so unexpected a shock, and the endearing attentions of his Lucilia were lavished upon him in vain. It threw him into a fever, affected his intellects, and, in a paroxysm of delirium, he destroyed himself †.

* Giffan. de Gent. Memmiad.

† This is the cause generally assigned by his biographers and commentators; and as Memmius was exiled in the year of the city 701, and towards the close of that year, the date we are furnished with precisely coincides with that offered by the Chronicle of Eusebius, which states Lucretius to have been forty-four years old at the time of his death. Cicero, as I have already observed, in his letters to Atticus, vii. 24, 25, speaks of a Lucretius, a bosom friend of Cassius, who was resident at Capua, at the time when the senate fled from it, along with Pompey's army, at the approach of Cæsar; and who repeatedly communicated to Cassius an account of the transactions that occurred. If the Lucretius here referred to were the sub

He was, at this time, about forty-four years of age: the date of the city being probably 702, and his poem, though completed, had not

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ject of this memoir, he must have been at least four years older at the time of his decease, than Eusebius has allowed; for the flight of Pompey and the senate from Capua did not take place till the year of the city 705. Yet the Lucretius here spoken of was rather a relation of the poet, than the poet himself: for, although from a similarity of years, from mutual connexions, and, more than every thing else, a mutual attachment, and open avowal and defence of the Epicurean system, it is in the highest degree probable, and indeed uniformly admitted, that the closest acquaintance and intercourse were maintained between Titus Lucretius and Cassius; yet the former does not appear to have possessed a roving disposition, much less a disposition to have travelled into a quarter of great political tumult and danger. It is said, that he once accompanied his friend Caius Memmius to his government in Bythinia; and, had Memmius been at this time alive, and still in a state of exile, it would be much more reasonable to look for Lucretius in Greece, to which place Memmius had been banished, than at Capua, in the midst of civil tumults and contending armies. The Chronicle of Eusebius, therefore, continues still unimpeached, and we cannot do better than rely upon it.

There is more controversy among the critics, concerning the time when Lucretius died, than when he was born; for while Eusebius, and consequently St. Jerom, fix him to have been at this period forty-four years old, there are others who will not allow him to have been more than twenty-six; and, it is curious to observe, in what manner the present and similar mistakes have been copied from writer to writer, and in every copy have exhibited some ingenious addition. Thus, Donatus kills him, or rather makes him kill himself, on the very day in which Virgil took his virile gown. "Decimo septimo anno," says he, "ætatis virilem togam cepit, illis consulibus iterum quibus natus erat. Evenitque ut eo ipso die Lucretius poeta discederet." Vit. Virg. P. Briet, whom Bayle has convicted of eight errors in his first eight lines, accords, in this instance, with Donatus. De Poetis Latinis. But Creech, who appears to have met with some such anecdote, yet not to have remembered the story completely, declares, that he died, not on the day of Virgil's *majority*, but on that of his *birth*; and immediately adds, that a Pythagorean might hence easily conceive, that the soul of Lucretius had instantaneously passed into the body of Virgil, and thus at once inspired him with a truly poetic taste. "Vix," says he, "absoluto opere moritur, eo ipso die quo *natus est* Virgilius; et aliquis Pythagoreus credat Lucretii animam in Maronis corpus transiisse, ibique longo usu, et multo studio exercitatam poetam evasisse." In Præf. Lucr.

Equally erroneous, too, or, at least equally unfounded, is that report of Eusebius, that the paroxysm of insanity in which Lucretius destroyed himself was produced by philtres, administered to him by Lucilia in a fit of jealousy, and with a view of recovering that affection which she was suspicious he had bestowed on some other object: whence the commentator upon Creech's English version, and after him Guernier, have advanced a step farther, and, without the smallest authority, thrown out a hint that this lady was perhaps his mistress, and not his wife, although she is expressly denominated his wife by Eusebius, St. Jerom, and every early writer who has left us any tidings upon the subject. Who does not perceive that the whole of this story of philtres and jealousy is a fiction founded upon the double fact of the grief and alienation of our poet's mind, and the fond and assiduous attention which Lucilia bestowed upon him during his illness? And who does not, at the same time, perceive an attempt to renovate the same charge of voluptuousness, which was so maliciously advanced against Epicurus and his disciples in former ages?

But this is not the whole of the wonderful tale narrated in the Chronicle of Eusebius; for he did not, as it seems, kill himself upon first becoming insane, but lived many years afterwards, and, like Torquato

hitherto been made public. Cicero, notwithstanding the enmity he had manifested against Epicurism from the moment of his deserting this system of philosophy, out of regard to the memory of his deceased friend, undertook to become his editor, and to revise it in the few places where revision was necessary. This task, it is probable, he executed about a twelvemonth afterwards, during the winter he spent in Cilicia; the government and protection of which was, at that time, committed to his hands *.

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Tasso, or our own lamented Cowper, evinced regular alternations of reason and derangement; during the intervals of which malady, like these two poets also, he composed the greater part of the work that has immortalized him. That he may have been subject, during his last illness, to some alternating insanity, is by no means improbable, but not from the ridiculous cause of an amorous philtre communicated to him in a fit of jealousy, and especially the sort of philtre employed by mistake upon this occasion, which, according to St. Jerom, was aconite or monks hood. "*Illa sponte sua*," says he, "*miscuit aconitum: Lucilia decepta furorem propinavit, pro amoris poculo.*" That moonks-hood will speedily and effectually poison is, I suppose, known to every one, but that it should produce the marvellous effect of a periodic madness, will not be very readily accredited by botanists or physicians. Giffanius has well observed, that the whole story reposes upon no authority, and is entitled to no belief; and he hence attributes the poet's decease, with far more probability, to the cause assigned in the text.

* There has been a long and idle contest among the critics, whether the six ensuing books of the Nature of Things be the whole of which the poem ever consisted. The question originated from a casual assertion of Varro, that a verse, not now to be found in any part of it, formed the beginning of its twenty-first book: but Varro does not mention, whether it were the twenty-first book of The Nature of Things, or of some other poem Lucretius may be supposed to have written, and which Frachetta conceives he actually did write. Had this, however, been the fact, it is almost impossible that we should not have been made acquainted with its title, and its object, as well as possessed some other fragments besides this one solitary verse of Varro, delivered down to us, either by Priscian, Tertullian, Lactantius, Arnobius, or Donatus, who have quoted so largely from all the six books of the Nature of Things. At the same time, it is scarcely possible, upon a minute and critical examination of the Nature of Things, to conceive that any additional book could either have preceded or been superadded to those, of which the poem consists in its preserved form. It comprizes a perfect whole as it exists at present; and no didactic poem I am acquainted with, either ancient or modern, has fairer pretensions to the harmonious combination of a beginning, a middle, and an end. Its object is to develop the principles of the philosophy of Epicurus. It commences, therefore, with its first rudiments: it exhibits and establishes its general doctrines; and it then applies those doctrines to the explanation of all the phænomena of nature: the most familiar, as well as the most abstruse. The two last books, indeed, may be regarded as a kind of dramatic denouëment or peripœtia of the whole; in which, from the principles progressively advanced, every event is accounted for, and rendered luminous. The dark curtain of nature is, as it were, undrawn: her multifarious wheels are at work before us—and the vast and entire machine is presented in all its connexions and dependencies. I cannot, therefore, but agree with Giffanius in conceiving, that either Varro

Thus perished, untimely, Titus Lucretius Carus, the immortal author of THE NATURE OF THINGS, and whom Scaliger, with a felicitous brevity of character, has denominated "a divine man, and an incomparable poet *." But virtue and talents have no arbitrary control over the mutable enjoyments of the present world: and not Lucretius alone, but almost every one of those illustrious Romans, whom I have enumerated as the friends of his youth, may be adduced as forcible examples of the truth of this position. There is, indeed, a similarity of fate and misfortune attendant upon the latter part of their lives, so truly astonishing, if not altogether unparalleled, that I cannot consent to close this biography without taking a brief glance at it.

Caius Memmius, who, as I have already observed, was banished, by his countrymen, into Greece, died during his exile. He retired,

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himself must have written erroneously, when he alluded to a verse in the twenty-first book of Lucretius, or that some transcriber of Varro has equally erred in writing Lucretius for Lucilius, or some other poet whose labours have not descended to the present day. But the author of the Nature of Things appears to have settled the controversy in the completest manner himself, by pointing out to us, in two express passages, the first and last books of which the poem was ever designed to consist.

Thus, that the sixth book was to conclude the work, we may collect from the following verses towards the commencement of this very book itself:

Tu mihi *suprema præscripta ad candida calcis*
Currenti spatium præmonstra, callida Musa,
Calliope! requies hominum, divômque voluptas:
Te duce ut insigni capiam cum laude coronam. Lib. VI. v. 91.

Muse most expert, belov'd of gods and men,
Calliope! O aid me as I tread
Now *the last limits of the path prescrib'd*,
That the bright crown with plaudits I may claim. v. 94.

And that the doctrine of a vacuum constituted the subject of the first book, we learn from the following:

Nunc omnes repetam quam raro corpore sint res,
Commemorare, quod *in primo quoque carmine claret*. Lib. VI. v. 936.

This thus premis'd, recal we next to mind
How rare the frame of all things, as ere while
Conspicuous prov'd we *in our earliest strain*.

* Lucretius, divinus vir, atque incomparabilis poeta. In Arist. Hist. Anim.

first of all, to Athens, where he resided for some time; whence he removed to Mytelene, and, last of all, to Patre, near Corinth. Here, from the suavity of his manners, the inhabitants unanimously conferred upon him the freedom of their city. He settled, therefore, among them, and adopted, a short time before his death, a particular friend of Cicero's, of the name of Lyso, who was himself a citizen of Patre. Brutus and Cassius, in the last convulsions of Roman liberty, unable to survive the death-blow the republic had received at Philippi, followed the example which Cato had not long before given them at Utica, and fell by their own swords. The resolution of Caius Velleius, who was likewise engaged in this fearful battle, did not yet forsake him altogether. In conjunction with Lucius and Tiberius Claudius, he maintained the contest a few months longer; but upon the final triumph of Octavian at Perusia, he fled into Sicily, with a few other virtuous characters who had survived the battle of Philippi, and, in the same manner, destroyed himself. The fortune of Lucius Cicero I am unacquainted with: like Lucretius he appears to have abstained from all personal connexion with the government, and to have possessed a large share of the affection of his brother Marcus, who, in his familiar letters, is frequently speaking of him in terms of great fraternal tenderness.

The unhappy fate of Marcus and Quintus Cicero are too well known to need any detail in this place. They both fell, in consequence of the infamous convention between Lepidus, Octavian, and Antony, by which the confederates agreed to sacrifice to the private vengeance of each other the most esteemed and most virtuous of their friends. The black catalogue was completed, and the names of the two brothers forming a part of it, they, with the rest, were proscribed, and condemned to death. Quintus was barbarously beheaded, along with his son, in his own house at Rome, to which he had privily returned for pecuniary supplies. The circumstances attending his discovery and execu-

tion are deeply interesting and pathetic, but cannot be dwelt uopn at present. Marcus, as is known to every one, was overtaken and slain at a little farm he possessed at Caieta; at the time he was searched for, he was concealed amidst the shades of his garden; but his retreat was pointed out by an ungrateful young man, who had formerly been a slave to Quintus Cicero, and had been emancipated at the particular request of Marcus, whose affection for him had from this time been rather that of a father than of any other relation. His head and his right hand were immediately severed from his body by a tribune whom his eloquence had not long before saved from the disgrace of a public execution.

The fates of Pomponius Atticus, and of Lucretius Vespillio, the two last of the early friends of our poet, of whom I shall give any account, were more fortunate, and they are the only persons who can lay claim to any degree of success among the whole of this virtuous and patriotic party. The names of both of them were likewise enrolled in the black catalogue of the proscribed. Yet against Vespillio, who, as I have before observed, had made literature and eloquence his chief pursuit, and had seldom or never interfered in the dangerous politics of the day, no great degree of resentment appears to have prevailed among the triumvirs: he was concealed from his pursuers by an ingenious contrivance of his wife; and after the heat of the pursuit was over, he fled at first to Sulmo, the birth-place of Ovid, and afterwards to Cnæum *, whence, upon the termination of the civil war, he returned to Rome, and persevered in his former profession of the law.

Titus Pomponius Atticus was a character of more prominence: without forfeiting his reputation for patriotism, he had hitherto possessed sagacity enough to be respected, and sought after by all the con-

* Plut. in loc.

tending factions of his country. He had been on terms of alliance with Cæsar and Anthony, while the most intimate friend of Cassius and Brutus:—yet Anthony, upon the present occasion, readily resigned him, at the solicitation of his two colleagues: and hence his name was also in the list of the proscribed. On the first surmise of this villany, that unrivalled presence of mind, for which he had ever been remarkable, proved again of essential service to him. The object of Atticus, who was at this time in Rome, was, like that of the two Ciceros, to reach either Macedonia or Sicily; but he pursued a different plan to accomplish it: and the stratagem he invented succeeded according to its merit. He attired himself, without loss of time, in the habit of a Roman prætor, and disguised the slaves whom he selected to accompany him in the dress of attendant lictors. He left the city with all possible speed, travelled in the most public manner, and invented a story, to give plausibility to his journey, that he was sent by the triumvirs themselves to negotiate a peace with young Pompey. In this manner he was received in every city through which he passed with all possible marks of distinction, accommodated with horses, provisions, and every assistance he required—travelled entirely at the public expence, and arrived at Sicily in perfect safety. In this retreat he continued quiet and unmolested, till the political tempest of his country had discharged itself of its fury. He then returned to Rome, at the particular request of Augustus, and continued in possession of the esteem both of himself, and Agrippa, till his death; which, nevertheless, was not long afterwards effected by his own hands: extreme grief, in all probability, for the loss of his earlier companions and friends, having compelled him to a step which was common among the wisest and most virtuous of the heathen world; and regarded rather as an act of duty and heroism, than of criminality and disgrace.

# APPENDIX.

HAVING thus amassed together the scattered fragments that relate to the life of Lucretius, added some few memoirs of other illustrious Epicureans who were his coëvals and friends, and attentively examined the doctrines they professed, I proceed to offer a brief sketch of the alternate support and opposition experienced by this celebrated school in subsequent æras.

It is once more necessary to observe, that every school of philosophy among the Greeks, whether of Ionic or Italic origin, as well as every sect whom they proudly denominated *barbarian*, whether Chaldean, Egyptian, Persian, or Celtic, pre-supposed the eternal existence of matter: upon the form or mode, however, of its original existence, and the process by which it acquired its present appearance and organization, they differed very materially; some maintaining, that every thing has existed from everlasting, as it appears at present; and others, that the visible world has had a beginning.

Among the Greeks, Ocellus Lucanus and Aristotle were the chief who contended for the first opinion: the former asserting, that the universe is utterly incapable of generation or corruption, of beginning or end, and that it is of itself perfect, permanent, and eternal; and the latter, asserting still more expressly, not only that the universe, as to its elementary matter and general configuration, is eternal and underived, but that mankind, and every other species of animals, have subsisted by an uninterrupted chain of propagations from all eternity,

without origin or first production; and that the vegetable and mineral kingdoms are of equal, underived, and everlasting duration. I enter not into the more mysterious parts of the peripatetic system, the sacred triad of Form, Privation, and Matter, the Primum Mobile, the Εντελεχια, or Perfect Energy, by which the Primum Mobile itself was first put into motion, and continued in a state of uninterrupted activity; I confine my remarks to its more palpable and tangible axioms, and which admit of no disputation: of the rest, much is involved in doubt, and not a little in contradiction. In reality, the *physics* of Aristotle, notwithstanding the authority of his name in other respects, do not appear to have made any great impression upon the world at any time; they are the weakest part of his philosophy, and rather betray the vanity of attempting to innovate upon existing systems, than of elucidating what was not understood.

The espousers of the doctrine that the *form*, though not the *matter*, of the visible world has had a beginning, divaricate into a variety of ramifications, of which the chief are the Pythagoric, the Platonic or Academic, and the Atomic.

In the system of Pythagoras, we trace a sort of mystical triad as clearly as in that of Aristotle; and it is probable that the former set the example, and even gave the hint both to Aristotle and Plato. The Pythagorean triad was expressed by the Greek numbers, one, two, and three, or monad, duad, and trine. In reality, numbers were all in all with Pythagoras, the very cause of essence to beings *. But to drop his esoteric or concealed institutions, the material universe, upon the Samian philosophy, was itself the supreme and formative Divinity; the eternal or universal Mind, residing in, and animating the mass of matter as a whole, in the same manner that the human mind resides in,

* Τους αριθμους αιτιους ειναι της ουσιας. Arist. Metaph. i. 6. Athanag. Apol. p. 49.

and animates the grosser body. The mind or soul of human beings, however, as well as of all other animals, was, upon this hypothesis, capable of quitting the external frame upon its dissolution; yet it was not capable of an independent existence; it migrated from body to body, and, after various chyliads, or thousands of years, returned to its original frame, in consequence of its resurrection from the grave. Upon this theory, the soul of the world gave motion, figure, and phænomena to itself; and the earth existed, because it willed to exist, out of its own substance. It was, in the language of Anaxagoras, an εμψυχον, or animated system.

The theory of Plato was, in many points, derived from Pythagoras; for Socrates, of whom Plato was one of the most distinguished scholars, was rather a moral and political, than a physical or metaphysical philosopher: and hence his creed was either deficient upon the subject of cosmology, or too simple and irrecondite to satisfy the curiosity of his pupils. Plato, too, had his trine or triad of essences, as well as Pythagoras and Aristotle; but, like that of Aristotle, it was evidently borrowed from Pythagoras. The triad of Plato consisted of an eternal, intelligent, immaterial Deity; a logos (ὁ λογισμος του Θεου) or Divine Reason, the eternal fountain of ideas, or the exemplars of things; and matter. The logos, or logismus, the fountain of all forms or ideas, was in every respect a parallel principle with the duad of Aristotle, both being possessed of a similar power, and equally dependent upon the Perfect Energy, or Supreme and Eternal Agent. Matter, however, was not thus dependent; for it was a principle as eternal, incorruptible, and underived, as the immaterial Deity. It was strangely supposed, however, to be incapable of form or quality *, and hence the necessity of conceiving the existence of a logos,

* On this account the terms *incorporeal*, and *immaterial*, are not synonymous in Platonic writings; matter itself being *incorporeal*, or without form or body, till associated with the divine exemplar or logos: a distinction necessary to be attended to in the study of the Academic hypothesis.

or source of all forms and ideas, which, with Plato, are nearly convertible terms; an idea, properly so called, being an intellectual form, and a form, literally so denominated, a visible idea. From the union, then, of the logos, or Divine Reason, with matter, proceeded an animated world, and sensible or corporeal existences. The kind of union supposed to subsist between the Divine Reason or exemplar, and the Deity itself, it is difficult to explain, or even to conjecture. In some part of his writings, and especially in his Timæus, Plato seems to regard the former as a being impersonated and distinct from the efficient Cause; but, in general, he speaks of it as a mere medium or instrument employed, and he was thus commonly understood by philosophers of contemporary schools. Hence Seneca, in express allusion to this doctrine, asserts, that "the exemplar is not the efficient cause of reason, but an instrument necessary to the cause *;" and hence, too, Laertius expressly regards it as nothing more than the mind or reason itself of the immaterial Deity †. Be this, however, as it may, since unfashioned matter constitutes the third substance in this triad of creative powers, the trinity of Plato can bear no possible resemblance, in its first and undisguised declaration, to the trinity of the Christian church. Whatever, then, may become of the divine logos or exemplar, it is evident, that Plato conceived the existence of two eternal and independent causes of all things; the one, that *by* which all things are created, which is God; and the other, *from* which all things are created, which is matter: and, in this respect, he completely assimilated his views with the Epicurean hypothesis. He conceived, however, independently of this tenet, that unfashioned matter had a soul of its own, exclusive of the animating and intelligent energy it received from the supreme Architect; and in this tenet seems to consist the chief absurdity of the Platonic hypothesis; for he hereby appears, in a great degree, to

* Epist. 65. † In Plat. l. iii. 69—78.

render the interference of all foreign control unnecessary, if not impertinent and tyrannical. The soul of man he conceived to be of a superior nature to this soul of the world, to have emanated originally from the Supreme Divinity, and by him to have been planted, for some cause not clearly ascertained, in different stars or planets; where it is ordained to wait, till a material body is prepared for its reception on earth: on the dissolution of which, the soul, if virtuous, refunds or remigrates to the Divinity itself; if vicious, is sentenced to a material Tartarus, and chastised with material punishments.

I now proceed to the consideration of the Atomic theory, which, in the hands of Democritus, supposed the existence of matter alone, divided into an infinite multitude of primary or elementary particles, of which some were eternally intelligent, and others eternally senseless and incogitative; and hence incapable of resisting the action of the former, by whose control over them, and union with them, the visible world was produced. Under the plastic hands of Epicurus, however, the atomic philosophy assumed a very different, and much more rational appearance. Matter with him consisted of an infinite multiplicity of elementary corpuscles; of which the whole were equally unintelligent and senseless, and solely operated upon in the work of creation by an immaterial Divinity *, "possessed of all immortality and beatitude," and through the medium of a system of "immutable laws which they received at the commencement of the universe †," and which will continue to act till the universe itself shall be dissolved.

In its mere *physical* contemplation, therefore, the theory of Epicurus allows of nothing but matter and space, which are equally infinite and unbounded, which have equally existed from all eternity, and

* See the preceding Life of Lucretius, p. lxxiv. † Ibid. p. lxxiv.

from different combinations of which every individual being is created. These existences have no property in common with each other; for, whatever matter is, that space is the reverse of, and whatever space is, matter is the contrary to. The actually solid parts of all bodies, therefore, are matter; their actual pores, space, and the parts which are not altogether solid, but an intermixture of solidity and pore, are space and matter combined. Anterior to the formation of the universe, space and matter existed uncombined, or in their pure and elementary state. Space, in its elementary state, is positive and unsolid void: matter, in its elementary state, consists of inconceivably minute seeds or atoms—so small that the corpuscles of vapour, light, and heat, are compounds of them; and so solid that they cannot possibly be broken, or made smaller, by any concussion or violence whatever. The express figure of these primary atoms is various: there are round, square, pointed, jagged, as well as many other shapes. These shapes, however, are not diversified to infinity; but the atoms themselves, of each existent shape, are infinite or innumerable. Every atom is possessed of certain intrinsic powers of motion. Under the old school of Democritus, the perpetual motions exhibited were of two kinds:—a descending motion, from its own gravity; and a rebounding motion, from mutual concussion. Besides these two motions, and to explain certain phænomena which the following poem developes, and which were not accounted for under the old system, Epicurus supposed that some atoms were occasionally possessed of a third, by which, in some very small degree, they descended in an oblique or curvilinear direction, deviating from the common and right line anomalously; and hence, in this respect, resembling the oscillations of the magnetic needle.

These infinitudes of atoms, flying immemorially in such different directions, through all the immensity of space, have interchangeably tried and exhibited every possible mode of action,—sometimes repelled

from each other by concussion; and sometimes adhering to each other from their own jagged or pointed construction, or from the casual interstices which two or more connected atoms must produce, and which may just be adapted to those of other configurations, as globular, oval, or square. Hence the origin of compound bodies; hence the origin of immense masses of matter; hence, eventually, the origin of the world itself. When these primary atoms are closely compacted together, and but little vacuity or space intervenes, they produce those kinds of substances which we denominate solid, as stones, and metals: when they are loose and disjoined, and a large quantity of space or vacuity occurs between them, they produce the phænomena of wool, water, vapour. In one mode of combination, they form earth; in another, air; and in another, fire. Arranged in one way, they produce vegetation and irritability; in another way, animal life and perception.—Man hence arises—families are formed—society multiplies, and governments are instituted.

The world, thus generated, is perpetually sustained by the application of fresh elementary atoms, flying with inconceivable rapidity through all the infinitude of space, invisible from their minuteness, and occupying the posts of all those that are as perpetually flying off. Yet, nothing is eternal and immutable but these elementary seeds or atoms themselves: the compound forms of matter are continually decompounding, and dissolving into their original corpuscles: to this there is no exception:—minerals, vegetables, and animals, in this respect all alike, when they lose their present configuration, perishing from existence for ever, and new combinations proceeding from the matter into which they dissolve. But the world itself is a compound, though not an organized being; sustained and nourished like organized beings from the material pabulum that floats through the void of infinity. The world itself must therefore, in the same manner, perish: it had a

beginning, and it will eventually have an end. Its present crasis will be decompounded; it will return to its original, its elementary atoms; and new worlds will arise from its destruction.

Space is infinite, material atoms are infinite, but the world is not infinite.—This, then, is not the only world, or the only material system that exists. The cause whence this visible system originated is competent to produce others; it has been acting perpetually from all eternity; and there are other worlds and other systems of worlds existing around us. In the vast immensity of space, there are also other beings than man, possessed of powers of intellect and enjoyment far superior to our own: beings who existed before the formation of the world, and will exist when the world shall perish for ever; whose happiness flows unlimited, and unallayed; and whom the tumults and passions of gross matter can never agitate. These, the founder of the system denominated gods;—not that they created the universe, or are possessed of a power of upholding it; for they are finite and created beings themselves, and endowed alone with finite capacities and powers;—but from the uninterrupted beatitude and tranquillity they enjoy, their everlasting freedom from all anxiety and care.

Such is the system of Epicurus, reduced to a brief outline; and such the sublime subject of the poem that follows. Those who are conversant with modern philosophy will perceive, from this short sketch, a striking resemblance to a great variety of the most important and best established doctrines of the present day. These I pretend not to investigate in this introductory essay, as the different comparisons may be more advantageously brought forwards in the progress of our pursuit. To the ensuing pages I therefore refer my readers for additional information; and am much mistaken if, on closing the volumes, they will not coincide with Lambinus in admitting that the phi-

losophy of Epicurus was the most rational, and enforced the best principles of any system of philosophy recorded by prophane writers.

The doctrines of this system, however, were from time to time disputed by other schools: and the contest appears for a long while to have been conducted with no small equality between the disciples of Epicurus, Aristotle, Zeno, and Plato; each sect, in its turn, prevailing over the others.

The chair of Epicurus was filled upon his death by Hermachus, one of his most confidential friends and followers, whom by his will he appointed his sole executor, and whose intrepidity in defending his master's tenets against the sophists and dialectics eminently qualified him for this office. The Epicureans of chief estimation besides himself, anterior to the æra of Lucretius, were, Metrodorus, Polyænus, Polystratus, Dionysius, Basilides, Apollodorus, Protarchus, Phædrus, and Zeno; of whom the last two, as I have already observed, were joint residents and professors at the Epicurean establishment, when Lucretius, and his co-students, were committed to it for education. I have already mentioned the names of a great variety of characters of the first rank and celebrity, who professed Epicurism at the time in which Lucretius flourished; to these may be added, Trebasius, Piso, Albutius, Pansa, and Patro, who was recommended to the protection of Caius Memmius by Cicero himself*. Even at this period, therefore, the Epicurean school appears to have enjoyed a complete triumph at Rome over every rival institute: nor could it fail of doing so, from the conjoint exertions in its favour of such characters and scholars as Atticus, Cassius, Velleius, Memmius, and Lucretius. Even in the Augustan age, it seems still to have retained, if not to have increased, its

* Epist. Fam. xiii. 1.

popularity. We are told by Seneca, that not the learned alone, but even the unlettered, reverenced the name of Epicurus; and Lactantius asserts, that no other sect was, at this time, by any means so flourishing. It is to the credit of this sect, moreover, that, notwithstanding its great numbers, it never subdivided into parties; and that the opinions of its institutor were voluntarily submitted to with more implicit confidence, than Pythagoras, even by an express law, could ever exact from his γνησιοι ὁμιλεται, or most attached and genuine disciples.

It was in consequence of this perfect deference to the doctrines of Epicurus, and the uninterrupted union of his followers, that the school continued to flourish under the Roman emperors, for a long course of years, as Laertius asserts, after other schools had begun to decay. The most celebrated adherents to this system, from the death of Lucretius to the establishment of the Christian religion, were Pliny the elder, Celsus, Lucian, and Diogenes Laertius. Of these, the first, to whom we are indebted for his "Natural History of the World," does not, however, appear to have imbibed the whole of the Epicurean theory, and especially the tenet of a multiplicity of habitable worlds. Celsus is far better known as an Epicurean philosopher, in consequence of the controversy between himself and Origen. His works are totally lost, except detached passages cited by Origen in his reply. It is generally conjectured, that he flourished under Adrian and Aurelius Antoninus. Origen, however, mentions two philosophers of this name, both Epicureans; the former of whom, he tells us, existed in the reign of Nero, while the latter was born in that of Adrian, whom he survived *.

* Δυο δε παρειληφαμεν Κελσους γεγονεναι Επικουρειους· τον μεν, προτερον, κατα Νερωνα· τουτον δε, κατ' Αδριανον, κατωτερω. L. i. contr. Cels.

Lucian is far better known as a severe but humorous satirist than as a politician or philosopher, though he has some pretensions to notice in the two last characters. He flourished under Aurelius Antoninus, by whom he was appointed procurator of Egypt with a liberal salary. Philosophic tenets of every kind seem to have sat but loosely upon him; yet, in his Dialogues, he always treats his avowed master with respect, and he is almost the only philosopher to whom he is decently civil. He unwarrantably misrepresents Socrates, and declares Epicurus to have been the only sage who retained a sound intellect in the midst of madmen and fools. To the writings of Diogenes Laertius I have already had frequent occasion to refer. He lived in the beginning of the third century of the Christian æra, and is well known to the republic of letters as a most diligent biographer. According to Jonssius, he acquired the surname of Laertius from having been born at Laertes, a small city of Cilicia*: and he did what every man should do who is in pursuit of truth, and has sufficient leisure for the purpose. With an active and unbiassed mind, he profoundly investigated all the different systems that were proposed to him by the literature of the Greeks; and having minutely appreciated the pretensions and merits of each, he gave his hearty suffrage in favour of Epicurus, and immediately began to collect, into one regular tract, all the scattered fragments that yet remained of him relative to his person, his principles, and his practice. Laertius, from many of the idioms he has adopted, appears to have been acquainted with the writings of the Christian fathers, and has hence been believed to have been a Christian himself. "But this," says Menage, "*is impossible*, he could not have been a Christian, *for he bestows immoderate praises on Epicurus*†.

* Jonss. l. iii. 12.

† Ελεημοσυνην διδοναι, pro eo quod vulgo Gallice dicimus *donner l'aumone*, in Aristotelis vita usurpavit; qui loquendi modus cum Christianorum scriptorum proprius videatur, Laertium Christianum fuisse vir quidam doctus suspicatur; sed frustra, Christianum non fuisse, indicio esse possunt quæ Epicuro tribuit laudes immodicæ. Observ. l. 1.

It must be confessed, however, that Epicurism, which thus maintained its sway at Rome, obtained at no time any great degree of favour at Alexandria, where, under the Ptolemies, learning and learned men received the most flattering encouragement; and which continued, under the Roman emperors, to be the chief seat of philosophy and science. For this contempt it is, nevertheless, easy to account. The warm and elevated minds of the Asiatics are possessed of more imagination than judgment; they are fond of what is marvellous, and prefer the splendour of mysticism to the beauties of simplicity. It was from this quarter that Pythagoras derived his system, and much of its ænigmatic involution was artfully transferred into their own doctrines, both by Plato and Aristotle. The Orientalists were, therefore, hence, prepared for the tenets of the Samian, Academic, and Peripatetic schools, while the students of the latter formed a ready alliance, not only with the scientific arcana of the magi, gymnosophists, and Egyptian priests, but with the vulgar superstitions and vernacular traditions of the country. Hence, in a century or two after the commencement of the Christian æra, there was not a single school in this celebrated mart for learning, whether Grecian or Asiatic, that retained its purity. A change of some kind became necessary, and it was attempted; not, however, as it ought to have been, by a return to first principles, but by a pretended selection, from every system, of that which was conceived to be its essential or most valuable doctrines: whence, a new order of philosophy sprang up, more absurd and heterogeneous than any which had preceded it; and this, from the choice which was thus exercised, its advocates denominated Eclectism. Of this confused amalgamation, or rather general plunder of opinions, Potamo is said to have been the inventor; but, as from Platonism a larger share had been stolen than from any other theory, and as the name of Plato still preserved a large portion of its primæval repute and veneration, the greater body of the Eclectics continued to denominate themselves Platonists, notwithstanding their innovation upon his doctrine.

What considerably added to the confusion of this Babel edifice was, that from the growing reputation of the Christian church, the purity of its principles, and the incontrovertible miracles which had been wrought by many of its earliest professors, Christianity and Judaism had both been studied as philosophic sciences, and many of their doctrines been suffered to intermingle in the general mass. In consequence of which, multitudes of the earlier Christians themselves were induced to frequent Alexandria; where, in too many instances, they caught the common contagion, and combined the mysteries of modernized Platonism with the simple precepts of their own creed. Hence the writings of Athenagoras and Clemens Alexandrinus abound with pagan doctrines; and they themselves, as well as Pantænus and Ammonius, were all successively instructors in the catachetic school in this metropolis. Ammonius, however, in process of time, apostatised from the Christian faith; and his immediate followers, Plotinus, Porphyry, and Jamblichus, became in succession its most inveterate adversaries: yet it is probable that their attachment to Christianity would have rendered it more disservice than their enmity; for though possest of considerable learning, they were all, in the highest degree, mystagogues and enthusiasts; Plotinus contending with violence for the doctrine of divine emanation, and, as connected herewith, the worship of gods, dæmons, genii, and heroes; Porphyry, for the purgative exercise of corporeal abstinences and mortifications; and Jamblichus surrendering himself without restraint to all the superstitious practices of divination. The early connection of some parts of the Christian church with Oriental gnosticism, a belief which in many respects approximated that of Platonism, and paved a way for the reception of the latter, shews clearly how liable Christianity was to debasement from its earliest propagation, in consequence of the lawless sway of human passions and opinions, and how much more it would have suffered from the friendship than from the hostility of such hallucinated philosophers.

Into this chaotic mass of opinions, Epicurism, however, was never received. It was founded on physical experiments which could not be sublimated to the airy regions of Platonism, Pythagorism, Cabbalism, Gnosticism, or Eclectism. The dialectics of Aristotle might dazzle by their subtlety and corruscation; the asseverations of the Stoics might, in some degree, impose by their dogmatism; the indecision of the Sceptics might attract by its indolence and independence, but the system of Epicurus was, in no respect, calculated for the meridian of Alexandria. M. Degerando indeed, observes, that in Rome it discovered a disposition to shake hands with the Sceptic school, when on its decay*; but I am acquainted with no fact that can support such an assertion: no philosophy was possessed of more decisive axioms, and no disciples could adhere to them with more inflexibility. He is more correct in observing, as he does shortly afterwards, that "Epicurus, Zeno, and the Cyrenaics, contributed no gift to Alexandrian Eclectism;" and, that "their maxims were exiled as so many importunate laws, which awakened the spirit, and snatched it from those delicious reveries, in which it loved to lap itself †."

On this account, also, we may easily perceive, why Epicurism, or the Atomic doctrine, should have acquired but little notice during the earlier ages of the Christian church. I have already shewn, that whatever connection the latter had formed with the Grecian philosophy, was through the medium of the Samian, Platonic, or Peripatetic schools, which appear alternately to have triumphed over each other, and al-

* La philosophie Grecque, transplantée à Rome, éprouva bientôt, sur les empereurs, les effets de cet esprit de combinaison. Les théories de Platon cherchèrent à s'allier avec la morale des Stoïciens; celle d'Epicure parut tendre une main amie au Scepticisme abandonné. Histoire comparée des Systemes de Philosophie, vol. i. ch. 8.

† Epicure, Zenon, les Cyrénaïques ne portèrent aucun tribut à l' Eclectisme Alexandrin: leur maximes furent écartées comme autant de loix importunes qui en éveillant l'esprit, l'eussent arraché aux douces rêveries dont il aimoit à se nourir. Ibid.

ternately to have fallen. In effect, both the ethics of the Epicureans, which were only studied in the uncandid and deceitful narratives of hostile writers, and the whole range of their physical system, which denied all particular interference of Providence, the immortality of the soul, and a state of future resurrection,—till considerably explained and modified, were sufficient to excite alarm, and justify indignation. It was, for a similar reason, that Aristotle himself was, for a long period, anathematized; his doctrine of the eternity of the world being conceived an essential part of his entire system. Origen, indeed, who beheld in the eclectic chaos an attempt to unite the schools of Aristotle and Plato, seems to have conjectured that a similar coalition might advantageously have been produced between Peripatetism and Christianity; but this conjecture appears rather to have terminated in a simple wish, than in any actual effort*. Hence, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, Eusebius, and almost all the most learned defenders of the Christian faith, who flourished during its first six centuries, discover a strange propensity to a variety of Platonic and Pythagoric doctrines, but especially to the former, even while they openly and honestly oppose the grosser absurdities towards which they tended. St. Austin asserts expressly, that he was prepared for the reception of Christianity by a perusal of the writings of the later Platonists †; and in many of the hymns of Synesius, bishop of Ptolemais, which have yet survived their author, we trace much more of Cabbalism, Gnosticism, Platonism, and Peripatetism, than of the pure precepts of the gospel he professed ‡.

Yet, though the school of Aristotle was thus generally abandoned by the learned Fathers of the Christian church, it was by no means

* Even so late as the thirteenth century, the writings of Aristotle were prohibited by the synod of Paris, and afterwards under pope Innocent III. by the council of Lateran. Laun. de Fort. Ar. l. c.

† Confess. l. v. 14. De Utilit. Cred. c. 8.

‡ P. 312.

abandoned by the heretics; and the accuracy and legitimacy of reasoning, which they acquired by the study of the dialectics of this philosopher, gave them, in much of the common controversy, a manifest and decided advantage. The Christian Fathers were, at length, sensible of this advantage themselves; and, about the beginning of the eighth century, began to discover an inclination to enlist this part of the Peripatetic philosophy into the banners of their own faith. The attempt was first introduced by Joannes Damascenes, who flourished at the period I am adverting to, and retired about the middle of life, from a high station at the Saracen court, to a monastery at St. Abas, that he might enjoy full leisure to prosecute his studies. From this æra, Aristotle began to obtain an ascendancy over his rivals; nothing was heard of but the *trivium* and *quadrivium* of the Lycæum, or that circle of instruction, into which the liberal arts were at this period divided; the trivium comprising grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics; and the quadrivium, music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy: and so complete was the triumph of this school at one time, and so extravagant the general attachment to its philosophy, that Melancthon makes it a matter of complaint, that in sacred assemblies the ethics of Aristotle were read to the people, instead of the gospel *. Some few and feeble attempts were occasionally made to revive the credit of Plato; and in one or two instances, and especially under the pen of Rosceline, who flourished in the twelfth century, to introduce the opinions of Zeno, but they were all of contracted limits and temporary duration; whence, till the revival of learning in the fourteenth century, may the scholastic system be fairly regarded as maintaining a complete sway over the mystic, as well as over every other, by which it was occasionally assaulted. Plato was left in obscurity, the doctrines of Zeno abandoned, and Epicurus known only by name.

* Apol. A. C. p. 62. See also Laun. c. ix. 210, in which a similar complaint is repeated.

It is astonishing, indeed, to observe the ignorance of the schoolmen, as to the real philosophy of Epicurus, from a short time after the commencement of the Christian æra, to the beginning of the fifteenth century; for, excepting a few of the primitive Fathers of the church, Lactantius seems to have been almost the only writer tolerably instructed in its tenets. And, hence, almost every person who differed in his philosophic opinions from the dogmas of the synods and ecumenic councils, was denominated an Epicurean. Alexander, therefore, a Christian, who is supposed to have flourished in the beginning of the second century, was always looked back to as a disciple of this school, because he maintained, if we may credit Albertus Magnus, that God is matter, or does not exist independently of matter; that all things are essentially God, and that the figures of bodies are all imaginary accidents, and have no real existence*. David de Dinant, a Christian philosopher of the thirteenth century, is reported to have espoused the same tenets, and is imagined by Bayle, to have been an immediate disciple of another Christian philosopher of the same creed, of the name of Amalric, who, in like manner, taught, that "all things are God, and God is all things, both the Creator, and the thing created;" and whose body was preposterously dragged out of its grave, many years after it had been quietly inhumed, and sentenced to the flames for heresy†. These philosophers were both esteemed Epicureans in their principles, as was also the celebrated Peter Abelard, who wielded with so much reputation the weapons of polemic divinity, about half a century before the æra of Dinant. Giordano Bruno has likewise occasionally been ranked in the same catalogue: a bold and fantastic

* Dixit Alexander *Epicureus* Deum esse materiam, vel non esse extra ipsam; et omnia essentialiter Deum, et formas esse accidentia imaginata, et non habere veram veritatem. Alb. Magn. Phys. Tract. iii. 13.

† Omnia sunt Deus, Deus est omnia; Creator et creatura idem, &c. Bayle. Dict. Hist. et Crit. Art. Spinoze Res A. Almaric, though the fact is not recorded by Bayle, had, in his life-time, been convened before the second Parisian council, and, on account of his declared errors, fallen under its severe censures.

philosopher who existed as late as the 16th century, and was a strong champion for the eternity of matter. The works of Bruno, from which I shall occasionally offer extracts, were dedicated to our own well-known countryman, Sir Philip Sydney. England, indeed, had afforded him an asylum from the persecutions of bigots and enthusiasts on the Continent; and, from a variety of complimentary canzonets, which he composed in praise of the beauty of the ladies of London, for Bruno, it seems, was a gallant and a poet, as well as a philosopher, he acquired no small degree of the favour of queen Elizabeth herself. But the caprice and imprudence of Bruno prevented him from being satisfied with the polite attentions he received from our fair countrywomen: he returned to Naples, the city in which he was born, towards the close of the 16th century, and, having engaged in fresh theological disturbances with some of the cardinals of the Roman church, he was condemned, and burnt for heresy.

But none of these appear to have been, strictly speaking, of the Epicurean school; the eternity of matter was, undoubtedly, a tenet maintained by the founder of this sect, but maintained, as I have already observed, in common with every other philosophic school whatsoever: while the essential intelligence of matter, or material atoms, was a doctrine totally repugnant to the first principles of their system. These philosophers might, therefore, have been of the school of Democritus, who contended for the intelligence of a certain classification of atoms; or of that of Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, or Aristotle; but they could not possibly be followers of the system of Epicurus. Indeed, I cannot perceive any great degree of difference between the doctrines of Abelard, and his inveterate antagonist Champeaux, notwithstanding the high reputation he acquired in consequence of his triumph over him. Champeaux was accused of believing the Deity material, or, in the language of Bayle, of disguised Spinosism (Spinozeme non de-

velopé *;) and yet, whatever may have been the immediate arms with which Abelard encountered this heterodox son of the church, we are told that, on other occasions, he himself never hesitated to assert, that "God is all things, and all things are God; that he is convertible into all things, and all things are convertible into him; imitating, in this respect, the theosophy of Empedocles or Anaxagoras, and distinguishing the species of things according to their simple appearance †".

Abelard was therefore ranked,—and certainly considered as an atomist, with much more reason than many of the rest, whose names I have glanced at,—among the scholars of Epicurus: and Arnobius, of whose abilities Du Pin gives us no very favourable opinion ‡, Hierocles, the subtle and celebrated Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and an almost infinite number of other combatants of equal ability, were, from age to age, engaged in subverting the doctrines of these imaginary Epicureans.

Shortly after the revival of letters, however, and especially about the 15th century, notwithstanding the superiority which Aristotle still continued to maintain in the cloisters of monks, and the establishments of professed schools, the doctrines of Epicurus began, once more, to obtain a warm, and, in some measure, a fashionable encouragement. Philelphus, Alexander ab Alexandro, Cœlius Rhodigianus, Volaterranus, Jean François Pic, and many other philosophers of equal repu-

* Bayle. Dict. Historique et Critique. Art. Abelard. Res C.

† Deum esse omnia, et omnia esse Deum; eum in omnia converti, omnia in eum transmutari asseruit: quia Empedocleâ, aut forte Anaxagoricâ præventus theosophia, distinguebat species secundum solam apparentiam, nempe quia aliquot atomi in uno subjecto erant eductæ quæ latebant in alio. Caramuel. Phil. Real. l. iii. s. 3.

‡ Arnobius pretended to have been called to the profession of the Christian faith by his dreams. The bishops obliged him to give some proof of his attachment to their own religion, and he composed a work in seven or eight Books, entitled "Adversus Gentes." This publication I have never had an opportunity of perusing; but Du Pin informs us, that it was written with much haste, and that he appears to have been but little acquainted with the mysteries of the Christian faith. "Il attaque," observes he, "avec beaucoup plus d'addresse la religion des Paiens qu'il ne defend celle des Chretiens. Bibl. des Auth. Eccl. Tom. I. p. 204.

tation, had, at this time, the hardihood to intermix the atomic philosophy with the tenets of the Christian faith. Sennert, an eminent physician at Wirtemburg, published an express elucidation and defence of the atomic system, in a work entitled, Hypomnemata Physica, "Heads of Physics *;" Vives and Ramus ventured publicly to expose the defects of the Aristotelian philosophy, and Chrysostom Magneni, who published "A Treatise on the Life and Philosophy of Democritus †, attempted to reconcile the systems of the Peripatetics and the Atomists; a vain effort, however, and which he was obliged to relinquish. Magneni was an Italian, and the poets of Italy appear to have taken, at the same time, as much pains to restore the atomic system as the philosophers themselves. Hence Michele Milani wrote a very long and learned canzone, in which he unequivocally asserts, that it was purposely meant to adapt a great part of the atomic hypothesis to the Christian verity ‡. His example was followed by Baptista Guarini, who also wrote a book in favour of the same school §: and shortly afterwards by Francisco de Quevedo, a Spanish poet and philosopher ‖, and by our own countryman, Sir William Temple ¶.

But the 17th century presented us with two Epicureans, of far more celebrity than any of these: I mean Gassendi and Du Rondelle; both natives of France, and both of whom laboured with more assiduity and critical investigation to establish the moral character of the founder of this school, and the truth of his fundamental doctrines, than any of its adherents from the era of Diogenes Laertius.

Of these two accurate critics and elaborate scholars, Gassendi has acquired the greater share of reputation: for he not only wrote a bio-

* Ed. 1638. Wertemberg. † Lugd. Bat. 1648.

‡ In essa si spiega buona parte della filosophia di Democrito adattata alla verita Christiana. See Crescembini's Comentarj Poetici, l. ii. 10. § Gassendi Physique. Tom. II.

‖ This publication was imprinted in 1635, and entitled "Epicteto Español en versos consonantes, con el origin de los Estoicos, y su defensa contra Plutarcho, y defensa de Epicuro contra la opinion commun.

¶ This book I have not seen, but I quote from Gassendi, to whom it appears to have been familiar.

graphy of Epicurus, in common with his junior countryman Du Rondelle, but an elaborate commentary on the tenth Book of Laertius, which is itself a life and literary history of the same philosopher, and a complete system of natural and metaphysical philosophy; in which he endeavoured to improve upon the hypothesis of the Grecian sage in those parts in which it is defective, and to adapt it to his own era. The fame of Gassendi was soon proclaimed through all Europe, and Epicurus began at last to obtain his turn of ascendance in our literary schools and universities. Cudworth, although professedly a Platonist, had already felt himself compelled to adopt the atomic philosophy so far as related to its physics: "An Abridgment of Gassendi's Philosophy," together with several other works in favour of the atomic or Epicurean system, was published by Francis Bernier, a learned physician of Montpelier, while our own countryman Walter Charlton, wrote a treatise of a similar tendency in England, entitled "Physiologia Epicuro-Gassendo-Charletoniana;" and another to the same effect by G. B. De Sancto Romano, was produced from the Paris press, under the title of Physica e Scholasticis Tricis liberata: "Physics rescued from Scholastic Jargon."

The progress of modern Epicurism, however, though thus attempered and christianized, was not endured without much apprehension, and even a vigorous resistance. Nor was this apprehension, indeed, without some degree of reason: for while Gassendi was amassing and concentrating whatever could be advanced by ancient history, physical facts, and ingenious argumentation, in favour of Epicurus and his opinions,—supported at the same time, as he is reported to have been, by St. Evremond,—Bayle * was endeavouring to form a coalition be-

* Tous les disciples d'Epicure avoient pour sa memoire un respect profond. Tant que son ecole subsista, le jour de sa naissance fut celebré comme un jour de fête; et depuis le renouvellement des lettres, sa conduite, et sa morale ont trouvé parmi les modernes un grand nombre d'approbateurs. Volaterran, Philelphe, Laurent Valle, Saint-Evremont, le Chevalier Temple, une infinité d'autres que je pourrois nomener, ont signalé leur zele en faveur de ce philosophe. A tant de suffrages Bayle ajoute le sien, et pro-

tween the atomic philosophy and scepticism ; and Leibnitz † and Wolfe between that and Platonism or Pythagorism. Hobbes, the intimate friend of Gassendi, attempting to press the atomic system still farther, was reviving the long exploded doctrine of Democritus respecting the necessary intelligence of separate elementary corpuscles ; and Spinosa, with several other heterodox Jews of Spain and Portugal ‡, were renewing the old Eleatic doctrine that the universe, or matter collectively, and not in distinct atoms, was the Deity, and efficient cause of all things. It is not a little singular, that this last doctrine of Spinosa, or rather of Xenophanes, from whom both himself and the Eleatic sect immediately derived it, that God is the Universe, and the Universe God, not transitively, or with a power of emanation, but imminently and immutably, was now, for the first time, pretended to be discovered as comprising a part of the faith professed by two philosophic frater-

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nonce qu'il n'y a plus que des ignorans on des entêtés qui puissent juger mal d'Epicure. Discours Prelim. de M. de Bougainville. See his translation of Polignac's Anti-Lucretius into French.

† The monads of Leibnitz, however, are not precisely the same as those of Epicurus. They were immediately derived from the Pythagoric system, and hence have a closer resemblance to the *numbers* of the Samian, or the *ideas* of the Academic philosophy. Monads, under Leibnitz, as under Pythagoras, have no parts, neither extension, figure, nor divisibility ; each, however, is a true atom of nature, and incapable of destruction, except by the power of the Creator. Each monad differs from every other ; and each is also possessed of *perception* and *appetite*, in which respect each may be said to partake of the nature of soul. This power of *perception* and *appetite* produces an internal principle of alteration ; and hence the sympathies and affinities, the repulsions and separations, the combinations and forms of bodies. It is to this source, therefore, that we are obviously to look for the foundation of the late Dr. Darwin's philosophy, though I do not remember that he has any where indicated the fountain from which he derived it.

‡ A complete edition of the works of Spinosa have been lately published in 8vo. by professor Paulus of Jena. Spinosa was the son of a Portuguese Jew, and born at Amsterdam in 1632. His mode of reasoning is extremely incorrect ; and hence his arguments may, in many instances, be as well adapted by his adversaries as by himself. The following extract may serve as an example of this want of appropriation. Propositio. " Idei rei singularis, actu existentis, Deum pro causâ habet ; non quatenus infinitus est, sed quatenus aliâ rei singularis actu existentis ideâ affectus consideratur ; cujus etiam Deus est causa, quatenus aliâ tertiâ affectus est, et sic in infinitum."

Demonstratio. " Idea rei singularis, actu existentis, modus singularis cogitandi est, et a reliquis distinctus ; adeoque Deum, quatenus est tantum res cogitans, pro causâ habet. At non, quatenus est res absolute cogitans ; sed quatenus alio cogitandi modo affectus consideratur, et hujus etiam, quatenus alio affectus est, et sic in infinitum. At qui ordo, et connexio idearum idem est ac ordo, et connexio causarum ; ergo unius singularis ideæ alia idea sive Deus, quatenus aliâ ideâ affectus consideratur, est causa, et hujus etiam, quatenus aliâ affectus est, et sic in infinitum." Q. E. D. Ethic. Prop. ix.

nities in Japan * and China, of which the latter is denominated Foe Kiao †.

The creed or system of lord Bolingbroke seems to have been an intermixture of that of Spinosa and Leibnitz; or, to ascend higher, of the Pythagoric or Platonic, and the Eleatic schools; and hence the celebrated Essay on Man, which was certainly planned by himself, and composed by Mr. Pope, without his having been aware of its tendency, at the direct instigation of his noble patron, discloses, in every page, the doctrines of *sufficient reason* and a *material deity*: on which account, on its first appearance, the poem was regarded, and especially on the Continent, as one of the most dangerous productions that had ever issued from the press. In the present day, we allow to it a very liberal extent of poetic licence, and with such allowance it may be perused without mischief; but a few verses alone are sufficient to prove its evil tendency, if strictly and literally interpreted. The following distich, for example, discloses the very quintessence of Spinosism:

> All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body nature is, and God the soul ‡.

And the general result drawn from the entire passage, which is too long to be quoted, is no less so:

> In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One truth is clear—*whatever is, is right.*

If every thing be right at present, there is no necessity for a day of retribution hereafter; and the chief argument afforded by nature, in

* Possevin. Biblioth. Select. Tom. I. lib. x. c. 2. † Journal de Leipsic 1688. p. 257. Extrait du Livre de Confucius imprimé à Paris, 1687.

‡ To justify such observation, it is only necessary to compare this couplet, and the entire passage which belongs to it, with the following verses of Virgil, who has derived the idea he exemplifies from the very same source as Spinosa:

> His quidam signis atque hæc exempla secuti,
> Esse apibus partem divinæ mentis, et haustus

favour of a future existence, is swept away in a moment. Unite the propositions contained in these two distichs, and illustrated through the whole poem, and it follows, that the Universe is God, and God the Universe; that, amidst all the moral evils of life, the sufferings of virtue, and the triumphs of vice, it is in vain to expect any degree of retribution in a future state; every thing being but an individual part of one stupendous whole, which could not possibly subsist otherwise; and that the only consolation which remains for us is, that the *general good* is superior to the *general evil*, and that *whatever is, is right*:

> If plagues and earthquakes break not heaven's design,
> Why then a Borjia or a Catiline *.

Hence, Pope was generally denominated, on the Continent, *the modern* LUCRETIUS. As a *merely moral* poet, he was permitted to be read in Switzerland: but his French translator confesses that he thought it a duty he owed society, to correct, and render less daring, many of the expressions contained in the original work. "This school of philosophers," observes M. Bourguet, in a letter to M. de Meuron, state-councillor of the king of Prussia, "takes a pleasure in confounding all ideas: in pretending to develop God, it miserably confounds him

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> Ætherios dixere DEUM, *namque ire per omnes*
> *Terrasque tractusque maris*, cœlumque profundum. GEORG. iv. 220.
> Led by such wonders, sages have opin'd
> That bees have portions of a heavenly mind;
> *That God pervades, and, like one common soul,*
> *Fills, feeds, and animates the world's great whole.* WARTON.

Innumerable passages of a similar tendency might be selected from both the Georgics and the Æneid, but the task is unnecessary.

* There is no doubt that Pope was imposed upon by Bolingbroke, and is said to have regretted, in the latter part of his life, that he had thus lent the full extent of his talents to the propagation of infidelity. Hence, the following stanza of Mr. Mason, which professedly alludes to Pope, in his Elegy to a young nobleman:

> The bard will tell thee, the misguided praise
> Clouds the celestial sunshine of his breast;
> E'en now, repentant of his erring lays,
> He heaves a sigh amid the realms of rest.

with nature, and reduces mankind very nearly to the rank of brutes. In effect," continues he, "Mr. Pope, in his Essay on Man, has not said a syllable on the nature of the soul,—the most excellent part of man—on its immateriality, on its indestructibility, on its immortality. He has drawn the ideas of his poem from the works of lord Shaftesbury, from which, in many places, he has copied the very expressions. And, as to his morality, it is as superficial and heathenish (superficielle et payenne) as his lordship's own." See the Journal Helvetique 1738, and Reflexions sur les Ouvrages de *Literature*, Tom. VI. p. 111.

Philosophic speculations therefore, of such a tendency, and actually productive of such consequences, could not be indulged without apprehension, and were not to be promulgated without resistance. It was in vain that Gassendi, St. Evremond, Leibnitz, and Wolfe, appealed to their punctual performance of Christian duties, and public attendance upon Christian worship; Hobbes, Bayle, and even Spinosa, appealing to the same, some degree of suspicion still attached to all of them, and the eloquence of Bossuet and Fenelon, the subtlety of Malbranch, the logic of Clarke, and the gigantic talents and learning of Cudworth, were all called forth and confederated in the common cause. Des Cartes had already, moreover, began to put forth his enormous powers in pursuit of some new system of natural philosophy; and though, like Cudworth, compelled to drink, in some measure, from the Epicurean stream, he enlisted under the banners of the alarmists, and his prodigious and well-directed opposition was a host of itself in their support.

But logic and natural philosophy were not the only weapons employed against these heterodox sons of the church, the muses were also applied to for their contribution, and, notwithstanding their having espoused the opposite cause in Italy, they consented to the application which was made to them in France; in consequence of which,

the cardinal Polignac, whose name is well known in the republic of letters, produced a Latin poem of nine Books in hexameter verse, of no small degree of merit, which he entitled "Anti-Lucretius, sive de Deo et Natura*;" from which title it is obvious, that the aim of the cardinal was chiefly directed against the modern disciples of Epicurus: but, whatever might be its success, and how well soever such success might be deserved against other philosophic reformers, neither poetry nor prose had any avail in this instance. The dialectics of the schools had yielded to the *novum organon* of the immortal Bacon; syllogistic logomachies to an attentive examination of nature; the Epicurism of Gassendi was embraced by the most eminent mo-

* This celebrated poem, we learn from the Eloge of M. de Boze, as also from the preface prefixed to the first edition, took its rise from mere accident. During a short residence of the abbé Polignac in Holland, in the year 1697, he formed an acquaintance with the learned Peter Bayle: whom he was astonished to find attached to the system of Epicurus, and delighted with the poem of Lucretius, which he appeared to have completely committed to memory. The abbé found this system was gaining ground very considerably among men of letters, and immediately determined on opposing it by a poem of an opposite tendency. On his return, therefore, to the quietude of his own home, he composed one in five books, which he entitled Anti-Lucretius. This formed the rudiments of the future and more perfect work, which extended to nine, and which added, to the attack upon Lucretius, an additional assault upon the doctrines of Spinoza, Hobbes, Newton, and even Locke himself. Polignac was about forty years old when he commenced this undertaking: he proceeded with it very slowly, reading it, as it advanced, to Malbranche, and a great number of other literary friends, both before his election to his cardinalship, and afterwards, during his residence at Rome: but, perhaps, no poem, after all, has had so many escapes from being buried in oblivion. The cardinal himself was forty years at work upon it, and at length died at the extreme age of eighty, leaving it still unfinished; and in such a confused state, from the variety of additions and alterations he had made in it, that it was attended with the utmost difficulty, in many instances, to trace its connection. His friend the abbé Rothelin, however, to whom on his death-bed he entrusted his indigested papers, undertook the Herculean task. At this task he laboured occasionally for several years, and, at length, died himself as he was on the point of completing it. This was an additional evil, from which the poem did not recover for a long time: finally, about the year 1746, nearly half a century after its commencement, it was ushered into the world by M. de Beau, Professor of Eloquence in the University of Paris.

This poem is certainly possessed of very considerable merit: its Latinity is, for the most part, correct, though by no means equal to that of Buchanan or Casimir; its order is perspicacious, and its similies, in general, appropriate. Its principal defects appear to be inanimation and extravagance of system. The greatest injury it sustains is from its title: the author, in this respect, should have been more modest: by himself, he is certainly instructive, fertile, and elegant; but he has no pretensions to enter the list with Lucretius.—A very good French translation of this poem was given in prose by M. de Bougainville, perpetual Secretary of the Royal Academy of Belles Lettres in 1750.

dern philosophers, and at last appears to have obtained an eternal triumph, from its application, by Newton and Huygens, to the department of natural philosophy, and, by Locke and Condillac, to that of metaphysics.

It is useless to pursue this history any further: the systems which have since been started in opposition to the Atomic, however splendid and fashionable for the moment, have already flitted away, or have no prospect of obtaining any permanency. Of these, the principal is that of the Idealists, of whom the chief leaders were Berkely and Hume. The former, dissatisfied with Locke's explanation of the mode by which sensation is communicated to the mind, incapable of tracing the connexion between external objects and the mind itself, and consequently the existence of an external world, boldly denied such an existence, and maintained that sensations and ideas were mere modifications of the soul, concatenated by a system of laws immutable and universal; whence the existence and necessary connexion of cause and effect, the proof of identity, and the demonstration of an intelligent Creator. The system of Hume was founded upon that of Berkely; but, instead of restraining, it extended it to a still more extravagant length. Hume, in imitation of Berkely, contended that the external world was incapable of proof; that the mind or soul was nothing more than a consciousness of existence, and that such consciousness depended alone on a succession of ideas produced either by sensations or impressions: but he maintained exclusively that he could no more trace any necessary catenation between such ideas or sensations, between one event and another, than he could trace the existence of external objects. Facts, he admitted, conjoined with facts, but are not necessarily connected with each other; and hence to assert that such connexion was produced by a system of operative laws, was, in his opinion, to presume, but by no means to reason. Upon this theory, therefore, there is no-

thing existing in all nature but impressions and sensations, and the ideas thence resulting;—there is no such thing as causation, no proof of identity, none of a God. Yet it would be injustice to assert, that Mr. Hume hence denied the being of a God; on the contrary, he admitted it, and pretended to found his belief of such a Being on a kind of *innate impression*, though he would not allow it the name of an innate idea *, a sort of moral sentiment, as developed by Hutchinson.

The ideal system has been opposed with no small degree of success by two others derived from very different premises, yet each highly ingenious, and in many respects incontrovertible: the one invented by Dr. Hartley, and founded on the doctrine of vibration and the association of ideas; the other by Dr. Beattie and Dr. Reid, and which appeals to the decisions of common sense †.

These responsive theories, however, originating in our own country, have not satisfied the metaphysicians of the Continent; and, in reality, being principally directed to our own meridian, they do not embrace all the objectionable points presented by continental hypotheses which have obtained celebrity enough to require notice. M. Kant has hence advanced a new system, which has the boast of being of universal application, and in every respect underived from antecedent philosophers: but as this is a system rather intellectual than material, it by no means falls within the scope of the present lucubration to analyze it. It affects, in a greater degree than any other theory whatever, to take nothing for granted, and to trace all ideas and cognition to their earliest source; yet, with a singular sort of contradiction, it commences with pre-supposing the existence of certain first principles and an external world. It is strangely obscured, moreover, by the perplexity and abstruseness of its vocabulary, its author not only having invented a host of new terms, but too generally ap-

* On Human Understanding, Essay xii. † See these different systems more minutely adverted to in the Note on Book IV. v. 766. of the ensuing Poem.

propriated to those in common use a sense foreign to that in which they are daily employed upon other, or even similar occasions; so that the proselyte has not only the task of learning a new language before he can be initiated into the Kantian philosophy, but of unlearning that which it has cost him years, perhaps, to acquire. It is on this account that M. Kieseweter, as well as several other disciples of the professor, have attempted to re-model its nomenclature, to render his conceptions less obscure and recondite, and to present the whole theory in a form more abridged and systematic *. At the present moment, nothing in Germany is so fashionable as the study of the *Transcendental Philosophy*, or *Criticism of pure Reason*, as its inventor has chosen to denominate it; but many, who have studied it, are dissatisfied with it already, and appear to be aiming at an erection of different schools out of its ruins. Its chief antagonists for this purpose are M. M. Jacobi and Reinhold, and an anonymous author, who signs himself Œnesidemus, all of whom seem equally sensible of its insufficiency, and have hence attempted to connect it with some other theory. Jacobi, like Leibnitz, whose system in many respects he avowedly prefers to the Kantian, is a professed Platonist, and on this account is for connecting the Transcendental Philosophy with Platonism †: Œnesidemus, as his fictitious name imports, is a Sceptic, and he, on the contrary, is for conciliating it with the philosophy of Pyrrho ‡: while Reinhold, who has invented a sort of theory of his own, which is denominated Elementary Philosophy, makes it his object to form a junction between the Transcendental and the Elementary §. After all, however, Kantism itself, notwithstanding its proud boast of perfect independence and originality, seems, in many respects, to be little more than a kind of modern eclectism, an hypothesis deduced from prior schools, and in many instances betraying

* Versuch einer fasslichen Darstellung der wichtigsten Wahreiten der neuern Philosophie, &c. Berlin, 1798. † Beiträge zur Leichtern übersicht, &c. band 3. Hamburg, 1802.

‡ Beiträge zur Berichtigung, Hamburg, 1803. § Œnesidemus; ou Observations sur la Philosophie de Reinhold.

its pillage. "It attracts," observes M. Degerando, who has well studied it, "the friends of Natural Philosophy by the nature of its results; those of Rational Philosophy by the character of its methods. It says to the former, '*all knowledge is restricted* to the limits of experience;' it says to the latter, '*all knowledge proceeds, à priori, from the laws of the understanding.*' With Locke, it asserts, that *there are no innate ideas;* with Leibnitz, that *experience can only result from the chain established between different facts, through the medium of internal notions:* it has imitated Plato in his *ideas of pure reason;* Aristotle, in his *logical forms.* It has flattered Idealism, by repeating after it, that *we can know nothing but the mere appearances of things;* Scepticism, by throwing over the principle of thought itself, the veil in which she has involved all external existences; finally, it seems to open a door to great numbers of those who, tossed for a long time on the ocean of systems, exhausted by the clash of all opinions, by the uncertainty of all metaphysics, seek for repose on a shore remote from all such disputes *."

* Histoire Comparée des Systemes de Philosophie. Vol. ii. 17.

THE

# NATURE OF THINGS.

## BOOK THE FIRST.

# ARGUMENT.

LUCRETIUS opens his Poem with an invocation to Venus, and then dedicates it to Memmius; briefly treating of its subject, and endeavouring to clear it from the charge of impiety. He now commences his subject in detail, and attempts to prove that nothing could spring from, or can return to, nothing; that there are certain minute corpuscles, which, though imperceptible to the senses, may be conceived by the mind, and whence every thing originates: that there is also space or vacuum—besides which nothing is to be traced in Nature: and that whatever else appears to exist, as weight, heat, poverty, history, war, are merely the conjunctions or events, the properties or accidents, of body and void; and that these elementary corpuscles are perfectly solid, indivisible, and eternal. He confutes the opinion of Heraclitus, who held that fire was the principle of all things; and of other philosophers, who, instead of fire, maintained the same of air, water, and earth; and at length of Empedocles, who regarded the whole as equally elementary and primordial. He attacks the homoëomery of Anaxagoras, and ridicules its absurdity. He contends, that the Universe is infinite on all sides; that space cannot be limited; and that the property of infinity attaches equally to body and void. Hence he severely censures those who believe that there exists a central point in the Universe, or admit the doctrine of central gravitation. He concludes with a brief panegyric upon philosophy, by the light of which mankind are able to penetrate the profoundest mysteries of Nature.

# *DE RERUM NATURA.*

## LIBER PRIMUS.

Æneadum genetrix, hominum divômque voluptas,
Alma Venus! cœli subter labentia signa

Ver. 1. *Parent of* Rome—] Nothing can be more beautiful or appropriate than this introductory address. Our author is engaging in a philosophic poem, which is to trace the origin and nature of things in all their unbounded variety and extent. He is writing at Rome, and chiefly for the benefit and instruction of his own countrymen; and what imaginary power could so properly be invoked, since invocations have been resorted to in all ages, as the deity who was the acknowledged source of all animal and vegetable life? What power could be so properly invoked by a Roman poet, desirous, more especially, of bespeaking the esteem of the multitude, as the divinity from whose embraces with a mortal immemorial tradition had derived their national descent?

But the poem was entered upon in a period of turbulence and war; probably about the year of Rome 695, and the 33d of our poet's age; in the midst of the contest with Mithridates and his Asiatic allies, while Clodius was intriguing at the forum, and the banishment of Cicero was determined upon through the connivance of both Pompey and Cæsar. (See the preceding Life, p. xxxviii.) All Rome was at this time divided into factions: the people were striving against the patricians, and the patricians against the people. In such a state of affairs, what chance had the poet or the philosopher to be attended to? Lucretius was aware of the difficulty, and, with great political delicacy and address, invokes the only deity who, according to the mythology of his country, could captivate the god of war, and induce him to unbuckle his armour.

This exquisite invocation has, nevertheless, been strongly and repeatedly objected to, as totally inconsistent with our poet's avowed disbelief of the system of religion at that time established by the government. "Cette invocation," says the Baron des Coutures, "a surpris beaucoup de savans comme contraire à la "doctrine d'Epicure." In another French publication, entitled "Lettres Recueilles par Jean Michael Brutus," there is an epistle from Petrus Victorius to Giovanni della Casa, archbishop of Benevento, inquiring whether Du Rondelle, who had then just published his celebrated little treatise "De Vita et Moribus Epicuri," had taken notice of such an apprehended incongruity? To this epistle no answer is subjoined; but Du Rondelle appears to have

# *THE NATURE OF THINGS.*

## BOOK THE FIRST.

PARENT of ROME! by gods and men belov'd,
Benignant VENUS! thou! the sail-clad Main,

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thought the objection too puerile to be noticed, for he certainly has not adverted to it. Tycho Brahe was likewise consulted upon the same subject, in 1596, by Is. Pontanus, who defended our poet with much dexterity and success. See Lettres publiées par M. Malthæus, à Leide, 1698, 8vo.

The Baron de Coutures has alſo offered an ingenious vindication. He denies this introductory part of the poem to be mythological, and contends that the whole is pure and allowable allegory: that Venus, in the sense here adopted, is a mere ſymbol of universal generation; and Mars, her paramour, of universal deſtruction: from the embraces of which two oppoſite powers proceed the regeneration, re-combination, and re-dissolution of all things; upon which doctrine the whole system of Epicurus is founded. Mr. Hume, however, who has likewise engaged in a short critique upon the same subject, is not disposed to be ſo easily satisfied. He admits that VENUS may possibly, in this introduction, be allegorically addressed, and that Lucretius, as a philosopher, had a right to address her "as the generating power which "animates, renews, and beautifies the universe; but "he was soon betrayed," continues our critic, "by "the mythology of his age, into incoherencies, while "he prays to that allegorical personage to appease "the furies of her lover Mars." Essays, vol. ii. p. 424. Of which preciſe opinion was the cardinal Polignac:

Immemor ipse sui, Martis describat amorem.

ANTI-LUCR. v. 35.

False to his creed, he paints the loves of Mars.

Now, allowing that the solution of De Coutures is somewhat too recondite, I can by no means perceive the incoherency complained of by Mr. Hume. The character of Mars is, in the present instance, altogether as allegoric as that of Venus; and the fiction of their union as correct and consistent with the true spirit of allegory, as any fiction that was ever invented. Venus is the poetic type of all female grace and excellence; Mars, of all the qualities of the hero: the one the goddess of beauty; the other the genius of war. What is there then incoherent in the loves of such ideal personages; in their mutual embraces; and the triumph of the former over the latter? The same fact is realized every day in the natural world. It is the very type of the connexion between Alexander and Thais, Marc Antony and Cleopatra, our own Edward and Eleonora. That such an allegory was consonant with the mythology of the Grecian people,

Quæ mare navigerum, quæ terras frugiferenteis,
Concelebras; per te quoniam genus omne animantum

is creditable to the consistency of that mythology itself. But, surely, Lucretius was not to relinquish a beauty of this description, merely because it coincided with the popular faith of his countrymen, or might even be founded upon it. In my mind, it was an additional motive for his having recourse to it; and nothing can, in a greater degree, demonstrate the delicacy of his taste, or the correctness of his judgment.

It is true, he is commencing a poetical essay, with the express purpose of confuting the popular mythology of both Greece and Rome. He asserts repeatedly that the whole system is fictitious, and totally unworthy of credit; but he asserts at the same time, that so long as it is regarded as mere fiction, no evil can ensue, and that its beauties are numerous and apposite:

Call, if thou chuse it, the resounding deep
Neptune, and Ceres term the golden grain,
Be Bacchus wine, its vulgar source forgot,
And e'en this globe of senseless Earth define
Parent of Gods: no harm ensues; but mark,
'Tis fiction all, by vital facts disprov'd.
Nat. of Things, B. ii. 666.

The address, therefore, introduced at the commencement of this poem, is pure, appropriate allegory, deriving a high degree of beauty from its relation to the popular mythology of the times. Surely, the Abbé St. Pierre must have totally forgotten this, and fifty other passages of a similar tendency, when he thus hastily expressed himself: "Je n'en dirai pas "d'avantage sur ce poete; l'exorde de son poeme en "est la refutation."

The Portuguese poet Camöens, than whom no man was ever better acquainted with classical literature, has followed Lucretius in a great part of this very allegory, as he has also in a variety of other conceptions, and in the present instance with peculiar felicity. The deity chiefly introduced into the Lusiad is the Urania-Venus, or heavenly Love of the ancients. Gama, the hero of the piece, is thwarted in his voyage of discovery towards India, by the devices of Bacchus, the chief demon of that country, who, as the voyagers advance towards the Indian highlands, flies with all speed to Neptune, and intreats him to raise a tempest and shipwreck them on the very point of completing their enterprize. The whole is exquisitely delineated. Neptune consents; and the gods of the winds are ordered into immediate action. The storm commences; and its description is perhaps unrivalled. The terrified adventurers are in the utmost danger, and expect every instant to perish. Gama addresses himself to the Almighty, the God of the Christian church, to him who was formerly the refuge of Israel in passing through the Red Sea, and of St. Paul in sailing over "the sandy syrtes of the faithless waves." The chieftain's prayer is heard: the star of love (amorosa estrella) is discovered in the horizon, prelusive of the approach of Venus herself, who immediately appears, and, in consistency with the power assigned her by Lucretius, averts the impending destruction, puts to flight the winds and the tempests, and restores to the world, peace, serenity, and gladness.

Mas ja a amorosa estrella scintillava,
Diante do sol claro orizonte,
Mensageira do dia, e visitava
A terra, e o largo mar con ledo fronte;
Venus que nos ceos a governava, &c.

When now the silver star of Love appear'd;
Bright in the east her radiant front she rear'd;
Fair through the horrid storm the gentle ray
Announc'd the promise of the cheerful day;
From her bright throne celestial Love beheld
The tempest burn, and blast on blast impell'd:
Her lovely nymphs she calls, the nymphs obey;
Her nymphs, the virtues who confess her sway;
Round every brow she bids the rose-buds twine,
And every flower adown their locks to shine.—
Bright as a starry band the Nereids shone,
Instant old Eolus' sons their presence own;
*The winds die faintly, and in softest sighs*
*Each at his fair one's feet desponding lies.* Mickle.

Since writing the above, I have looked into the Spanish commentary of Manuel de Faria i Sousa, where I find the same conjecture advanced, that the

And fruitful Earth, as round the Seasons roll,
With Life who swellest, for by thee all live,

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personification of Venus by Camöens, is an imitation of the present passage of Lucretius, whom the learned annotator has, moreover, vindicated at the same time. "Por ventura," says he, "que imitò el poeta en "esta eleccion al grande filosofo Lucrecio, que re- "suelto a cantar de las produciones de la naturalezas "no invocò otra deidad sino a Venus, a quien la "filosofia antiqua attribuia el titulo de autora de la, "cosas alma Venus," &c.: to which he adds, "I "esso sin memoria alguna de que Venus pro otro "lodo sea deidad lasciva; i por esso la invoca con ti- "tulo de pureza alma Venus, attendiendo a los oficios "licitos que ha de hazer en el poema en toda especie "de generacion: que es lo a que attendiò nuestro "poeta haziendola autora de la produccion de la "christianidad, i policia en la Asia."

I am nevertheless afraid that Camöens cannot so easily be defended as Lucretius, upon the point of allegory; the Portuguese bard having inharmoniously combined the mythology of the Greeks with the doctrines of the Christian church. Hence Mr. Mickle, notwithstanding his defence of Camöens in this respect, has thought proper in his version to smooth away its more obnoxious prominences, by omitting, in Gama's prayer to the Supreme Being, his reference to St. Paul and the Israelites, and by concealing the pagan term Venus under the more general and accordant appellation of Celestial Love. Yet the impropriety is not greater in thus blending the supernatural agency of the Christian religion with the mythology of the Greeks, than in combining the former with the Gothic machinery of magic and incantation; a practice that was common among Christian poets in every country throughout Europe, till the sublime and harmonious system first introduced by our own Milton into his immortal and unrivalled epic. No critic, however, has less right to be severe upon Camöens than Voltaire, though no critic has animadverted so harshly; for the former has not only introduced the very same combination of machinery into his Henriad, but has been guilty of the grossest incongruity in arranging it. Instead of following Lucretius and Camöens, in representing the power of Love as becalming every tempest and restoring tranquillity to nature, he has given to Love himself (to Cupid instead of Venus), and in a poem founded upon Christian tenets, the power of exciting the most terrible storms, and of unchaining all the winds and all the lightnings of heaven: and in this manner alone does he separate Henry of Navarre from his companions, and conduct him to the residence of the fair Gabrielle:

Il agite les airs que lui-même a calmés;
Il parle, on voit soudain les elemens armés.
D'un bout du monde à l'autre, appellant les orages,
Sa voix commande aux vents d'assembler les nuages,
De verser les torrens suspendus dans les airs,
Et d'apporter la nuit, la fondre, et les éclairs.
Henriad. Liv. 9.

The winds he maddens that he calm'd of late,
He speaks—and all is elemental hate.
From pole to pole his voice terrific flies,
Bids clouds o'er clouds, o'er tempests tempests rise;
Suspended torrents from their fountains fall,
And thunders, lightnings, night, usurp the ball.

With how much more elegance as well as classical propriety is this office allotted by Camöens to old Eolus?

Yet it may be observed, that neither Voltaire nor Camöens presumed to invocate Venus, or any other of the Grecian deities, for poetic assistance, as Lucretius has done at the commencement of this poem: but neither Voltaire nor Camöens had the same motive, otherwise there can be no doubt that each would have followed the example thus set before them. Invocations, indeed, either to real or allegoric powers, have been customary among poets in all ages. The practice is of immemorial date; and the man who would venture to begin a poem of importance without it, would be sure to incur the displeasure of the Muses, and perhaps be adjudged guilty of a contempt of court. Hence Vida, in his advice to his pupils, observes, that the best poets of every period have adhered to this usage.

Concipitur, visitque exortum lumina solis :
Te, Dea, te fugiunt ventei ; te nubila cœli,
Adventumque tuum : tibi suaveis dædala tellus

—— cœlestia divûm
Auxilia implorant, propriis nil viribus ausi.
Quos ores autem non magni denique refert,
Dum memor auspiciis cujusquam cuncta deorum
Aggrediere : Jovis neque enim nisi rite vocato
Numine, fas quicquam ordiri mortalibus altum.
Poetic ii. 20.

—— implore
The timely aid of some celestial power,
To guide your labours, and point out your road.
Chuse, as you please, some tutelary god,
But still invoke some guardian deity,
Some power to look auspicious from the sky.
To nothing great should mortals bend their care,
Till Jove be solemnly addrest in prayer.
Pitt.

Hence Homer and Virgil invoke the muse, without any specific name, in the commencement of their respective poems ; Vida and Klopstock, the holy Ghost ; Milton, both ; Tasso and Sanazaro, the holy Virgin ; and Gesner, an impersonification of enthusiasm. Dante and Ariosto, indeed, have occasionally adopted more extraordinary invocations still ; and the objections of the critics will certainly apply to them with but little possibility of palliation ; for the former, in the third canto of his Divina Comedia, and the latter, in the same canto of his Orlando Furioso, address the pagan god Apollo with little that can be called pure allegoric allusion, and with very much of the paraphernalia of the popular Grecian mythology.

The cardinal Polignac, who strenuously opposed the philosophy of the Roman bard, and of all other deists or atheists, ancient or modern, in a poem entitled Anti-Lucretius, of which I have already given some account in the preface, and who, so far as relates to poetic ornaments, was a frequent copyist of our author, did not indeed dare to imitate him in the present instance. Like that of Vida and Klopstock, the invocation he has adopted is addressed to the holy Ghost. It is possessed of no small share of beauty, however ; and the reader will doubtless be pleased with an opportunity of comparing the addresses of these antagonist poets together.

—— Te causa et regula mundi
Omnipotens, æterna dei sapientia, virtus,
Et mens, et ratio, vitæ dux optima nostræ,
Ipsaque lux animi, te solam in vota vocabo,
Hunc ades, et vati longum da ferre laborem.
Per te cuncta suo stant ordine, cuncta videri
Tandem, et nativis possunt emergere ab umbris ;
In te discendi nobis innata voluntas
Pascitur, et veri nunquam satiata cupido.
Incute vim dictis, propriamque ulciscere causam.
Anti-Lucr. l. i.

—— Thee the world's great cause,
And guide omnipotent, eternal source
Of virtue, wisdom, intellect, and soul,
Our life's best leader, and the mind's sole light,
Thee only I invoke ! be present now,
And aid thy poet in his vast emprize.
All, all survey'd, from thee, in order due,
Spring from the shades profound of native night.
To thee th' innate desire, the thirst unquench'd
Of truth, of science, guide my panting breast ;
Arm then thy bard, and thine own cause avenge.

Ver. 1. ——*by gods and men belov'd,*
*Benignant* Venus ! *thou the sail-clad main*, &c.]
The greater part of this address to Venus has been beautifully translated by Spenser, and introduced into his Fairy Queen. It occurs in B. iv. cant. 10, and the merit of the passage induces me to transcribe it.

Great Venus ! queene of beauty, and of grace,
The joy of gods and men, that under skie
Doost fairest shine, and most adorn thy place ;
That with thy smiling looke doost pacifie
The raging seas, and mak'st the stormes to flie :
Thee, goddesse ! thee, the winds, the clowdes do feare ;

And, living, hail the cheerful light of day :— 5
Thee, Goddess, at thy glad approach, the winds,
The tempests fly : dedalian Earth to thee

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And when thou spred'st thy mantle forth on hie,
The waters play, and pleasant lands appeare,
And heavens laugh, and all the world shewes joyous cheer.

Then doth the dædale earth throw forth to thee,
Out of her fruitful lap, abundant flowres :
And then all living wights, soon as they see
The spring breake forth out of his lusty bowres,
They all do learn to play the paramours :
First do the merry birds, thy pretty pages,
Privily pricked with thy lustful powres,
Chirp loud to thee out of their leavy cages,
And thee, their mother, call to coole their kindly rages.

Then do the salvage beasts begin to play
Their pleasant frisks, and loath their wonted food ;
The lions roar, the tigres loudly bray ;
The raging bulls rebellow thro' the wood,
And, breaking forth, dare tempt the deepest flood,
To come where thou dost draw them with desire :
So all things else that nourish vital blood,
Soone as with fury thou doost them inspire,
In generation seeke to quench their inward fire.

So all the world by thee at first was made,
And daily yet thou doost the same repaire ;
Ne ought on earth that merry is and glad,
Ne ought on earth that lovely is and faire,
But thou the same for pleasure didst prepare.
Thou art the root of all that joyous is,
Great god of men and women, queene of th' ayre,
Mother of laughter, and well-spring of bliss,
O grant that of my love at last I may not misse.

The commencement of this address is also imitated by Sir W. Jones, in the opening of his Caissa :

Thou *joy of all below and all above*,
*Mild Venus*, queen of laughter, queen of love,
Leave thy bright island, where on many a rose,
And many a pink, thy blooming train repose.

But it would be impossible to enumerate all the copies, to which, in different languages, this exquisite address has given birth. One of the best I have met with in any foreign tongue is that of Metastasio, beginning thus

Scendi propizia
Col tuo splendore
O bella Venere
Madra d'amore :
O bella Venere
Che sola sei
Piacer degli uomini
E degli dei, &c.

It seems probable, however, that Lucretius himself is an imitator in the commencement of this address, and that his eye was directed to the following verses in the orphic hymn to Venus, or Aphrodite :

Παντα γαρ εκ σεθεν εστιν—γενναις δε τα παντα
Οσσα τ' εν ουρανῳ εστι, και εν γαιῃ πολυκαρπῳ
Εν ποντῳ τε, βυθω τε.

From thee are all things;—all things spring from thee
In heaven above, the many-peopled earth,
In ocean, or th' abyss.

Ver. 6. *Thee, Goddess, at thy glad approach, the winds,*
*The tempests fly*:—] Much of Lucretius has been copied or imitated, as I have just observed, by poets in all ages and nations. An obvious imitation of these, and the two following lines, are to be met with in the very beautiful and animated Spanish poem, entitled Araucana, by Alonzo Ercilla, a bard of much celebrity, who flourished towards the close of the sixteenth century, and with whom the English reader is in some measure acquainted, by the abstract Mr. Hayley has given of this gallant and spirited production, in Vol. IV. of his "Poems and Plays." The subject of this epic is the warfare between the Spanish invading troops and the undaunted natives of Arauco, a district in the province of Chili in South America. The Indian demon, Epamanon, had appeared in most fearful array over the Spanish forces,

Submittit flores; tibi rident æquora ponti,
Placatumque nitet diffuso lumine cœlum.
Nam, simul ac species patefacta est verna diei,
Et reserata viget genitabilis aura Favonii;

begirt, like winter, with storms, and clouds, and terrible darkness. Having delivered his dreadful mandate to the affrighted troops, he dissolves again into air, and vanishes from sight. Then, observes Ercilla,

Al punto los confusos elementos
Fueron sus movimientos aplacando,
Y los desenfrenados quatro vientos,
Se van à sus cavernas retirando.
Las nuves se retraen à sus assientos
El cielo y claro sol desocupando.

Quick as he vanish'd, nature's struggles cease;
The troubled elements are sooth'd to peace.
The *winds no longer rage* with boundless ire,
But, hush'd in silence, to their caves retire;
*The clouds disperse*, restoring, as they fly,
*The unobstructed sun, and azure sky.*

Hayley.

A more general imitation still is to be met with in the Fasti of Ovid, as was long ago observed by Bentley, from whose notes Mr. Wakefield has introduced it into his own correct and elegant edition:

Illa quidem totum dignissima temperat orbem,
Illa tenet nullo regna minora deo:
Juraque dat *cælo*, terræ, *natalibus undis*;
Perque suos initus continet *omne genus*.
Illa deos omnes (longum enumerare) creavit;
Illa satis caussas, arboribusque dedit:
Illa rudes animos hominum contraxit in unum,
Et docuit jungi cum pare quemque suâ.
Quid *genus omne* creat *volucrum*, nisi *blanda voluptas*,
Nec coëant pecudes, si levis absit Amor?

Fast. iv. 91.

Sublime, she modulates th' attemper'd world,
Nor aught of godhead boasts an ampler sway;
Heaven, earth, and peopled main, her rites profess,
And in her fond embrace all nature lives.
She form'd the gods, in all their number form'd,
And times and tides to herbs and harvests gives.
Rude savage man forth from the wilds she led,
And bound with social and domestic ties.
What rears the feathery tribes but genial love?
But love, what stings the flocks with fierce desire?

To notice, however, all the copies which have originated from this beautiful address, would be endless. I will only add the following of Dr. Darwin, both because he admits it to be a copy, in a subjoined note, and because he has copied with spirit. He is describing the approach of Eros or Cupid instead of Venus: the son instead of the mother:

Earth, at his feet, extends her flowery bed,
And bends her silver blossoms round his head;
Dark clouds dissolve, the warring winds subside,
And smiling ocean calms his tossing tide.
O'er the bright noon meridian lustres play,
And heaven salutes him with a flood of day.

Templ. of Nat.

Ver. 8. *Pours forth her sweetest flow'rets; Ocean laughs*] Between the two images described in this verse, Creech, in his translation, has introduced four or five lines, which have no prototype in any copy of the original, at least in any I have ever seen:

The earth with various art (for thy warm pow'rs
The dull mass feels) puts forth her gaudy flowers:
[For thee doth subtle luxury prepare
The choicest stores of earth, and sea, and air;
To welcome thee she comes profusely drest
With all the spices of the wanton East:
To pleasure thee e'en lazy luxury toils:]
The roughest sea puts on smooth looks and *smiles*.

His annotator on these verses informs us that the supplemental lines are an *improvement* of the translator upon his author. That they are an *addition* must be confest: the improvement is not quite so obvious.

Pours forth her sweetest flow'rets; Ocean laughs,
And the blue Heavens in cloudless splendour deck'd.
For, when the Spring first opes her frolick eye,
And genial Zephyrs long lock'd up respire,

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Ibid. —*Ocean laughs,*] In the original, "rident æquora ponti." Creech, as I have already noticed, has translated the verb *rident* by the English term *smile;* as have also Evelyn, Dryden, and even Guernier in his prose version. But why this more feeble term should be adopted, instead of the true and forcible synonym, *laugh*, I am at a loss to determine. Even Marchetti, of whom I have not spoken in the preface with more approbation than he merits, has failed in this bold and beautiful figure. These are his words:

Tu rassereni i giorni foschi' e rendi
Col *dolce sguardo il mar chiaro e tranquillo.*

Metastasio, however, has compensated for the coldness and injustice of his countryman. He has copied this passage of Lucretius into the version I have just spoken of, and has rendered it complete and spirited:

*A te fioriscono*
Gli erbosi prati
E *i flutti ridono*
*Nel mar placati.*

To thee the fields so gay
In sweetest flow'rets blow;
*Laugh* the hush'd winds, and play
The placid deep below.

Chaucer has happily imitated the same nervous metaphor, but has applied it to the sun. Cant. Knight's Tale 1495.

And fierie Phebus rysith up so bright,
That all the orient *laughith* at the sight.

It is the more extraordinary that Dryden, in his translation of Lucretius, should, like Creech, have employed the tamer epithet of *smile*, because, in his borrowing the above passage from Chaucer, he has very justly retained the more manly expression of both Chaucer and Lucretius. Palamon and Arcite, b. ii.

The morning lark, the messenger of day,
Saluted, with her song, the morning gray:
And soon the sun arose *with beams so bright*,
That all th' horizon *laugh'd* to see the joyous sight.

Thus, too, in the Berrathron of Ossian: "When "thou comest forth in thy mildness, the gale of "the morning is near thy course: *the sun laughs* "in his blue fields; the grey stream winds in its "vale."

In the same manner, Gessner, in his "Death of Abel," b. i. Sey uns gegrüst du liebliche sonne! du giessest farb' und anmuth durch die natur, und jede schönheit *lachet* verjüngt uns wieder entgegen. "Welcome once more, thou lovely sun! thou givest "colours and graces to all nature; and every beauty "*laughs* with renewed youth around us."

But the boldest copy I have met with of this image of Lucretius, is by the Spanish poet Lope de Vega, in his Hermosura de Angelica, cant. xiii.

Mueve las hojas de la selva el viento
Y *la risa del agua* fugitiva,
Conciertase con ellas de tal modo
Que parece que esta *cantando todo.*

Now shakes the grove's green foliage to the breeze,
*With laughter shakes the stream's* perpetual flight:
'Tis harmony throughout; and earth and seas
*In songs of loud festivity* unite.

These verses have all the force of Oriental poetry, and are, perhaps, only exceeded by the following energetic and parallel passage of the Psalmist:

Let the sea shout, and all its fulness;
The world, and all its inhabitants;
Let the floods clap their hands,
And the mountains unite in exstacy,
At the presence of Jehovah who approacheth.
Ps. xcvii. 7, 8.

Aëriæ primum volucres te, Diva, tuumque
Significant initum, perculsæ corda tuâ vi.
Inde feræ pecudes persaltant pabula læta,
Et rapidos tranant amneis: ita, capta lepore,
[Inlecebrisque tuis omnis natura animantum]
Te sequitur cupide, quo quamque inducere pergis.
Denique, per maria, ac monteis, fluviosque rapaceis,
Frundiferasque domos avium, camposque virenteis,
Omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem,
Ecficis, ut cupide generatim secla propagent.

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Ver. 12. *Thee, Goddess, then, th' aërial birds*—] Mr. Wakefield has justly observed that Virgil has happily imitated this passage in his Georgics:

Avia tum resonant avibus virgulta canoris,
Et Venerem certis repetunt armenta diebus.
Parturit almus ager; zephyrique tepentibus auris
Laxant arva sinus: superat tener omnibus humor:
Inque novos soles audent se gramina tuto
Credere: nec metuit surgentes pampinus austros,
Aut actum cœlo magnis aquilonibus imbrem:
Sed trudit gemmas, et frondes explicat omnes.
l. ii. 329.

Thus elegantly translated by Mr. Sotheby:

Birds on their branches hymeneals sing,
The pastured meads with bridal echoes ring;
Bath'd in soft dew, and fann'd by western winds,
Each field its bosom to the gale unbinds;
The blade dares boldly rise, new suns beneath,
The tender vine puts forth her flexile wreath,
And freed from southern blast, and northern shower,
Spreads without fear each blossom, leaf, and flower.

There is however, I think, a much closer imitation in Georg. iii. 242—245.

The greater part of this address to Venus has likewise been obviously imitated by Statius, a frequent copyist of our poet, in his address to the Terra Mater.

O hominum divumque æterna creatrix
Quæ fluvios, sylvasque, animasque, et semina mundi
Cuncta, Prometheasque manus, Pyrrhæaque saxa,
Gignis, et impartis quæ prima alimenta dedisti,
Mutastique viros; quæ pontum ambisque, vehisque,
Te penes et pecudum gens mitis, et ira ferarum,
Et volucrum requies; firmum atque immobile mundi
Robur innoccidui.
Theb. l. viii.

O source eternal both of gods and men!
Who woods, and floods, and mortals, and the seeds
Rear'dst of the world—the stones, and plastic hand
Of Pyrrha and Prometheus, and the stores,
First given, renew'st—renew'st the race of man,
And round the main thy mighty bound propell'st;
The flock's gay gambols, and the forest-ire,
The lull of birds, alike thou sway'st supreme,
The firm, fixt pillar of the restless world.

But Statius, and most other imitators of Lucretius, are exceeded by Petrarc, in the following admirable verses:

Thee, Goddess, then, th' aerial birds confess,
To rapture stung through every shiv'ring plume:
Thee, the wild herds; hence, o'er the joyous glebe
Bounding at large; or, with undaunted chest,
Stemming the torrent tides. Through all that lives
So, by thy charms, thy blandishments o'erpower'd,
Springs the warm wish thy footsteps to pursue:
Till through the seas, the mountains, and the floods,
The verdant meads, and woodlands fill'd with song,
Spurr'd by desire each palpitating tribe
Hastes, at thy shrine, to plant the future race.

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Zephiro torna, e'l bel temps rimena;
E i fiori, e l'erbe, sua dolce famiglia;
E garrir progne, e pianger filomena;
E primavera candida, e vermiglia.
Ridono i prati; e'l ciel si rasserena,
Giove s'allegra di mirar sua figlia;
L'aria, e l'acqua, e la terra è d'amor piena,
Ogni animal d'amar si riconciglia.

Now zephyr sports, and spring's delicious hours
Lead forth the lovely tribes of herbs and flow'rs.
Now prates the swallow—philomel complains,
O'er every field the white, the vermeil reigns:
Bends the pure heaven its azure arch serene,
And ether laughs, enraptur'd at the scene.
O'er earth, air, ocean, Love triumphant sways,
All Nature feels him, and each breast obeys.

Ver. 12. —*th' aërial birds*—] Hence Pope, with a reference well worthy of himself:

Or fetch th' *aërial eagle* to the ground.

Ver. 13. *To rapture stung through every shiv'ring plume*:] To the same effect, Thomson:

'Tis love creates their melody, and all
This waste of music is the voice of love;
That e'en to birds, and beasts, the tender arts
Of pleasing teaches. Hence the glossy kind
Try every winning way inventive love
Can dictate; and in courtship to their mates
Pour forth their little souls;—
In fond rotation spread the spotted wing,
*And shiver every feather with desire.*

Of the entire passage, the following is a more general imitation, by Mr. Roucher, in his "Months:"

L'amour vole, il a pris son essor vers la terre:
Depuis l'oiseau qui plane au foyer du tonnerre,
Jusqu'aux monstres errans sous les flots orageux,
Tout reconnoît l'amour, tout brille de ces feux.
Dans un gras pâturage, il dessèche, il consume
Le coursier inondé d'une bouillante écume;
Le livre tout entier aux fureurs des désirs,
De ses larges naseaux qu'il présente aux zéphyrs,
L'animal, arrêté sur les monts de la Thrace,
De son épouse errante interroge la trace.
Ses esprits vagabonds l'ont à peine frappé,
Il part, il franchit tout, fleuve, mont escarpé,
Précipice, torrent, désert; rien ne l'arrête;
Il arrive, il triomphe, et, fier de sa conquête,
Les yeux étincelans, repose à ses côtés.

Quæ quoniam rerum naturam sola gubernas,
Nec sine te quidquam dias in luminis oras
Exoritur, neque fit lætum neque amabile quidquam;
Te sociam studeo scribundis versibus esse,
Quos ego de RERUM NATURA pangere conor
Memmiadæ nostro; quem tu, Dea, tempore in omni
Omnibus ornatum voluisti excellere rebus:
Quo magis æternum da dictis, Diva, leporem.
Ecfice, ut interea fera mœnera militiaï,
Par maria ac terras omneis, sopita, quiescant.
Nam tu sola potes tranquillâ pace juvare
Mortaleis: quoniam belli fera mœnera Mavors

---

Love flies—and earth his mighty influence shares;
From the bold bird th' electric flash that dares,
Deep to the monsters that in ocean dwell,
All feel his force, and with his fury swell.
O'er the rich glebe he fires the courser's blood,
Bathes him in foam, and plunges in the flood;
Stung with desire he snorts th' aërial tide,
And o'er the Thracian hills demands his bride.
Her breath scarce scented, barriers all are vain,
Cliffs, forests, cataracts, no more restrain:
He flies, he finds, he triumphs, and, opprest,
With eyes still sparkling, yields his limbs to rest.

Ver. 27. *To* Memmius' *view*—] Caius Memmius Gemellus, a fellow-student of Lucretius at Athens. The family of the Memmii were of high antiquity, and of very deserved renown among the Romans. Virgil thought proper to pay them a compliment by representing them as descendants from Mnestheus, who commanded one of the four ships that opened the naval games he has described in his Æneid.

Velocem Mnestheus agit acri remige Pristin,
Mox Italus Mnestheus, genus à quo nomine Memmî.

Mnestheus commands the Pristis, swift of oar,
Italian Mnestheus, whence the Memmii spring.

The Memmius whose patronage Lucretius here bespeaks, arrived at different and distinguished dignities in the Roman republic. During his prætorship he obtained the government of the province of Bithynia, and was afterwards appointed one of the tribunes of the people; an office his uncle had held with the highest reputation to himself, and benefit to the republic. It was this elder Memmius who first excited the Roman citizens to investigate the infamous conduct of Jugurtha, and accused the senate of venality and corruption. He procured an order for the former to be summoned to the forum, from the very center of the kingdom of Numidia; and boldly reprimanded him, when he appeared before the people, for his iniquitous conduct. But the city that, a few years afterwards, banished the virtuous Metellus, was already unworthy of the patriotic and undaunted spirit of Caius Memmius. He fell a sacrifice to the lawless violence of Apuleius and Glaucia, during the comitia for the election of consuls, to which office these ambitious desperadoes were fearful he would have been chosen.

Since, then, with universal sway thou rul'st,
And thou alone; nor aught without thee springs,
Aught gay or lovely; thee I woo to guide
Aright my flowing song, that aims to paint
To Memmius' view the essences of things:
Memmius, my friend, by thee, from earliest youth,
O Goddess! led, and train'd to every grace.
Then, O, vouchsafe thy favour, power divine!
And with immortal eloquence inspire.
Quell, too, the fury of the hostile world,
And lull to peace, that all the strain may hear.
For peace is thine: on thy soft bosom he,

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For a farther account of Caius Memmius Gemellus, I refer the reader to the life of Lucretius, prefixed to this volume.

Ver. 32. *Quell, too, the fury of the hostile world,* &c.] An ancient commentator upon Statius has justly commended this and the two ensuing verses of Lucretius, in an annotation upon the following passage, which is hence obviously borrowed:

O! mitis bellorum requies, et sacra voluptas,
Unaque pax animo; soli cui tanta potestas
Divorumque, hominumque meis occurrere telis
Impune, et mediâ quamvis in cæde frementes
Hos assistere equos, hunc ensem avellere dextra.

O thou, my balm in war, my dear delight,
And mind's sole quiet—thou, of gods and men,
Unhurt my fatal arms alone who dar'st,—
Dar'st, in the rage of battle, from the chief
To snatch th' uplifted sword, or, with prompt aid,
Succour th' affrighted courser.——

Ver. 34. ——*on thy soft bosom he,* &c.] The description of this amour is voluptuous, without being indelicate: and on this latter account more especially, Lucretius has very considerably the advantage of either Ariosto or Tasso. Milton perhaps, but Milton alone, excells him, in his picture of the loves of our first parents, in the garden of Eden. The purity of this painting is indeed only equalled by its elegance.

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unreprov'd,
And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd
On our first father: half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid. He, in delight
Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,
Smiled with superior love, and press'd her lips
With kisses pure.

Par. Lost, iv. 493.

Camöens, who, as I have observed before (see Note on ver. 1.), has imitated Lucretius in attributing to Venus the power of tranquillizing every storm, and restoring happiness to nature, probably had his eye also directed to this elegant delineation of the same deity, in his account of her approach to Jupiter, with a petition in favour of De Gama. The painting is

Armipotens regit, in gremium qui sæpe tuum se
Rejicit, æterno devictus volnere amoris :
Atque ita, suspiciens tereti cervice repostâ,
Pascit amore avidos, inhians in te, Dea, visus ;

so truly beautiful and delicate, that it may even be quoted after the above passage in Milton. It occurs in the second canto of most of the editions of the Lusiad, but is unaccountably omitted in the small copy of Manuel de Lyra, published at Lisbon in 1584. Goncalez had previously inserted it in his of 1572 ; and Faria i Sousa has, with much propriety, restored it in his splendid and illustrative edition of 1639 :

Os crespos fios douro se eparziam
Pello colo, que a neve escurecia
Andando as lacteas tetas lhe tremiam
Com quem amor brincava, e nam se via ;
Da alva patrina flamas lhe saiam,
Onde o minino as almas acendia.
Polas lisas columnas lhe trepavão,
Desejos, que como era se enrolavão, &c.

Adown her neck, more white than virgin snow,
Of softest hue the golden tresses flow ;
Her heaving breasts, of purer, softer white
Than snow-hills glist'ning in the moon's pale light,
Except where cover'd by the sash, were bare,
And love, unseen, smil'd soft, and panted there.
Nor less the zone the god's fond zeal employs,
The zone awakes the flames of secret joys.
As ivy tendrils, round her limbs divine,
Their spreading arms the young desires entwine ;
Below her waist, and quiv'ring on the gale,
Of thinnest texture flows the silken veil,
(Ah ! where the lucid curtain dimly shows,
With double fires the roving fancy glows !)
The hand of modesty the foldings threw,
Nor all conceal'd, nor all was given to view.
MICKLE.

Ver. 36. *Struck by triumphant love's eternal wound*] Thus Virgil, imitating the same passage :

Tum pater *æterno* fatur *devinctus* amore.
Æn. viii. 394.

Then thus the sire, by *love eternal struck.*

In the following of Petrarc, the similitude is equal, but results from a different idea :

Ma le ferite impresse
Volgon per forza il cor piegato altrove
Ond' io divento smorto ;
E'l sangue si nasconde, i non so dove.

The wounds she then made me sustain
Fix'd my wandering heart on the fair ;
I grew pale through each limb with the pain,
And my blood fled—I cannot tell where.

Ver. 38. *On thee he feeds his longing lingering eyes*] In the original, " pascit amore avidos—visus," literally " feeds his voracious eyes with love." Thus Virgil, adopting the same metaphor,

——*animum* pictura *pascit* inani.
He, with th' unsolid picture, *feeds his mind.*
Æn. i. 468.

And Claudian, with a still closer reference to Lucretius :

*Illecebris capitur*, nimiumque elatus, *avaro*
*Pascitur intuitu.* RUFIN. i. 164.
*Her charms entrance him*, and, with love elate,
*He feeds his eyes voracious.*

This elegant comparison of the fascinating power of love to a delicious and intoxicating feast, has by no means been disregarded by modern poets : but, in general, the latter have rather employed the intoxicating cup, in their similes, than the more solid viands of the banquet ; a deviation of which Apuleius set an early example. Thus, lib. iii. of his Transformation into an Ass : Admissis et sorbillantibus suaviis, sitienter hauriebam ; " *Thirsty I drank the soft con-* " *ceded kisses.*" And thus Boccaccio : E non accorgendosi, riguardandola, dell' amoroso veleno, che egli *con gli occhi beveva.* ALATIEL. " Unconscious, while

The warlike field who sways, almighty Mars, 35
Struck by triumphant Love's eternal wound,
Reclines full frequent: with uplifted gaze
On thee he feeds his longing, ling'ring eyes,.

---

" he beheld her, of the amorous poison which *he* " *drank in with his eyes.*"

Among the Asiatics this imagery is extremely common; and many of their most favourite metaphors are hence derived. Thus Ferdusi, in his Shah Nameh:

لب پر از مي ببوي كلاب

*Lips sweet as wine*, and fragrant as the rose.

So Hafiz, the pride of the bowers of Shiraz, with more amplification still:

برخ ساقي پريپيكر
همچو حافظ بنوش بادهٔ ناب

*Drink* then kisses *sweet as wine*
From thy favourite damsel's cheek;
Never shall her like be thine,
Though through paradise thou seek.

In my notes on the Song of Songs, I have given many other instances of the same figure. Solomon himself was indeed equally attached to it. Thus in the opening apostrophe of the royal bride, Chap. i. 1.

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth;
For thy love is *delicious above wine.*

And again, in the following passage, in which the simile equally refers to both eating and drinking; the royal lover, having previously compared his fair bride to a garden or paradise of sweets, on which he was panting to banquet, Chap. ii. 8.

Eat, O my friend! drink,
Yea, drink abundantly, O my beloved!

Perhaps the most exquisite simile of this kind that occurs in modern poetry is to be found in the elegant and well-known song of B. Jonson, generally sung as a glee. It is a direct imitation indeed from the Greek of Philostratus, but the copy is superior to its original; and there is a degree of moral truth and sublimity in the two first lines of the following stanza, which elevates them above all praise.

The *thirst* that in the soul doth rise
Doth ask a *drink divine;*
*Drink* to me only with *thine eyes,*
And I will *pledge with mine.*

In the following, Mr. Sotheby proves that he is by no means an unapt scholar in the imitative arts. It occurs in his spirited and harmonious version of Wieland's Oberon; but its merit is certainly, for the most part, his own; the idea conveyed in the original not exactly corresponding to the imagery exhibited in the translation. The passage is a part of the sixth canto of this fanciful and highly finished poem, and occupies the 54th stanza of the German.

Sie ist nun ganz für Hüon neugeboren,
Gab alles, was sie wan, für ihn, &c.

Amanda, too, o'erpower'd with fond desires,
To long-lost joys restor'd, thus warmly press'd,
Resigns herself, caressing and carest,
To each warm *kiss* that wak'ning passion fires.
His mouth the *never-sated draught* renews,
And from her lip, in *sweet voluptuous dews,*
Drinks deep oblivion of foreboded woes.

Such are the beauties to which the imagery, and, in some instances, the immediate passage before us, has given birth. The following, however, is an example of false taste, and a case in which it ought not to have been copied. It occurs in the Syphilis of Fracastorio, a poem which is nevertheless possessed of much general merit.

Ulcera (prole divûm pietatem!) informia pulchros
*Pascebant oculos*, et diæ lucis amorem,
*Pascebantque* acri corrosas vulnere nares. L. i.

Foul ulcers fed (kind heav'ns!) the beauteous eye,
The day's sweet lustre; fed, with acrid grume,
Th' eroded nostrils.

This passage requires no comment. The absurdity of applying a metaphor, that should be sacred to delicate and agreeable subjects alone, to so foul and fetid an exhibition, must be obvious to every one.

Eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.
Hunc tu, Diva, tuo recubantem corpore sancto
Circumfusa super, suaveis ex ore loquelas
Funde, petens placidam Romanis, incluta, pacem.
Nam neque nos agere hoc patriaï tempore iniquo
Possumus æquo animo; nec Memmii clara propago
Talibus in rebus communi deesse saluti.
Quod super est, vacuas aureis mihi, Memmius, et te,
Semotum a curis, adhibe veram ad rationem:
Ne mea dona, tibi studio disposta fideli,
Intellecta prius quam sint, contempta relinquas.
Nam tibi de summâ cœli ratione deûmque

---

In quoting the whole of this description, with high commendation, I am surprised that this manifest incongruity should have escaped, as it has done, the eagle eye of Dr. Warton. See his Reflections on Didactic Poetry.

Ver. 39. *And all his soul hangs quiv'ring from thy lips.*] It is as little possible to do justice to the original of this line as of the foregoing, v. 38.

Eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.

An idea somewhat analogous is to be found in ode vii. of Anacreon.

Καρδιη δε μιος αχρις
Ανεβαινε· και απισσην.

Now to my lips my heart was flying,
And all my quiv'ring soul was dying.

But perhaps the nearest approximation, in point of merit, is to be traced in the justly celebrated ode of Sappho, so admirably translated by Catullus into Latin, and by Phillips into our own language:

——τομοὶ ταν
Καρδιαν εν στηθεσιν ἐπτοασεν
Ως ἰδον σε, βρογχον· ἐμοι γαρ αυδας
Οὐδεν ἐθ' ηκει.

'Twas this bereav'd my soul of rest,
And rais'd such tumults in my breast;
*For while I gaz'd, in transport toss'd,*
*My breath was gone, my voice was lost.*

It has generally been allowed that the whole of this exquisite invocation is original. St. Pierre is the only critic I have met with who does our poet the injustice to contend, that it is a copy; and the reader will smile when he is informed that the worthy Abbé suspects him to have been pilfering from the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus. The passage to which he refers is contained in chap. 24, from ver. 5 to ver. 27. Of this sublime delineation he has given a version in French prose, as he has also of the present address of Lucretius, for a companion with each other; and having finished the former, he thus concludes: "Cette foible traduction est celle d'une prose Latine "qui a été traduite elle-même du Grec, comme le "Grec l'a été lui-même de l'Hebreu. On doit donc "présumer que la grace de l'original en ont disparu "en partie. Mais telle qu'elle est, elle l'emporte "encore, par l'agrément et la sublimité des images "sur les vers de Lucrèce *qui paroît en avoir emprunté* "ses principales beautés." Etudes de la Nature, Tom. ii. etud. 8. I freely confess that I have met

And all his soul hangs quiv'ring from thy lips.
O! while thine arms in fond embraces clasp
His panting members, sov'reign of the heart!
Ope thy bland voice, and intercede for Rome.
For, while th' unsheathed sword is brandish'd, vain
And all unequal is the poet's song;
And vain th' attempt to claim his patron's ear.
Son of the Memmii! thou, benignant, too,
Freed from all cares, with vacant ear attend;
Nor turn, contemptuous, ere the truths I sing,
For thee first harmoniz'd, are full perceiv'd.
Lo! to thy view I spread the rise of things;

with such frequent parallelisms of expression, of figure and phraseology, in Lucretius, with what occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, of which the reader will find many pointed out to him as he proceeds, that I am myself half-tempted to believe the Roman poet was no stranger, either to their existence, or their bold poetic beauties: yet I can trace no sufficient similarity between the passages in question, to render it, in my own opinion, probable that the one is a copy of the other. Let the reader, however, consult for himself. If Lucretius were in reality acquainted with the sacred books of the Jews, it was perhaps by means of some persons of this nation, who were resident at Rome, through which city great numbers of Jews were at this period scattered, as there were also throughout all Greece, and almost every part of the Roman dependencies. It was probably from the same source that Virgil, not long afterwards, derived his knowledge of the prophecies of Isaiah; and Longinus, still later, his acquaintance with the cosmogony of Moses. It should be remembered also, that the Hebrew Scriptures had been long translated into Greek, by the seventy interpreters, who flourished in the reign of Ptolemy, and executed their version at his express desire. In consequence of which Dr. Warton openly asserts, that Theocritus was well acquainted with this version, and copied largely from the Song of Songs into his own Idylls. Dr. Hodgson, indeed, maintains the same with respect to Anacreon: but it is often difficult to distinguish between original parallelisms and imitations; and hence the following, from Thomson, may or may not be a copy:

——who can speak
The mingl'd passions that surpris'd his heart,
And *through his nerves in shiv'ring transport ran?*
Autumn, 255.

Ver. 43. *For, while th' unsheathed sword is brandish'd,*—] For an account of the probable period of time when Lucretius began his poem on the Nature of Things, see note on ver. 1. of this book. His address to Venus, for the restoration of permanent peace, was not, however, attended with much success; since for more than half a century after the termination of the Jugurthine war, the republic was still violently and perpetually agitated by the ambi-

Disserere incipiam, et rerum primordia pandam;
Unde omneis natura creet res, auctet, alatque;
Quoque eadem rursum natura perempta resolvat:
Quæ nos materiem et genitalia corpora rebus
Reddundâ in ratione vocare, et semina rerum
Adpellare suëmus, et hæc eadem usurpare
Corpora prima, quod ex illis sunt omnia primis.
[Omnis enim per se divôm natura necesse est
Inmortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur,

tious attempts of Sylla and Marius, of Sertorius, Catiline, and Julius Cæsar.

Ver. 57. *Far, far from mortals*, &c.] It is much doubted by some of the best commentators, whether the six lines in the original, answering to the present and five following verses, be not an interpolation, or, at least, erroneously introduced by transcribers into the present place. They, at least, discover a certain want of connection with both the antecedent and succeeding sentences. They are not, says Mr. Wakefield, to be found in many copies both manuscript and printed; certainly not in the manuscript at Verona, nor in three other copies which I have collected in this country. Bentley regarded them as introduced in this place unconnectedly, and without any reference. And in the margin of the Cambridge manuscript, some ancient annotator has written, "These six verses are transposed into this position from Book II. not on the authority of the poet, but from the ignorance of his copyists." It is on this account they are included, in the original, in brackets; a mark which is here, and in several other places, designed to express a doubt.

They contain, however, the idea of ease and tranquillity, which Homer had long before represented as the common inheritance of the popular gods; although, according to the latter, this tranquillity was sometimes interrupted by contests among themselves, as well as by the daring obstinacy and opposition of mankind: but, excepting in such casual instances of mental commotion, they were Θεοὶ ῥεῖα ζωοντες, Dii tranquilli viventes, or, as Mr. Pope expresses it,

Immortals blest with endless ease.
B. 6, v. 170.

A passage, the Greek of which Milton perhaps had in his recollection, when he wrote in his Paradise Lost,

——Thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
*The gods who live at ease.* ii. 868.

Silius Italicus was impressed with the same idea; and hence, in describing the deity, says

Imperturbatâ placidus tenet otia mente.
Calm is his quiet, undisturb'd his mind.

The "immortal gods" of the Epicurean system are, however, of a very different description from those of the Greek and Roman populace, and are no where in the poem before us represented as the creators of the world, or as objects of religious worship. They appear, indeed, to be the very same order of existences as the "gods" of Milton, created and blessed spirits, endowed with endless duration, and possessed of far superior faculties to man. They are, therefore, as different from the popular deities of Greece and Rome, as these last are from the christian

Unfold th' immortals, and their blest abodes:
How Nature all creates, sustains, matures,
And how, at length, dissolves; what forms the mass,
Term'd by the learned, Matter, Seeds of Things,
And generative Atoms, or, at times
Atoms primordial, as hence all proceeds.
Far, far from mortals, and their vain concerns,
In peace perpetual dwell th' immortal Gods:
Each self-dependent, and from human wants

---

orders of angels and archangels. Respecting the essence of these angelic beings Lucretius seems in some measure undetermined. In Book V. 154, he represents them as totally uncompounded of matter, and consequently incapable of either affecting or being affected by material bodies, from the want of some common property.

For their immortal nature far remov'd
From human sense, from matter gross and dull,
Scarce by the mind's pure spirit can be trac'd.
* * * *
And, thus, th' immortal regions must from ours
Wide vary, congruous to their purer frames.

Yet in Book vi. 77, he obviously intimates, that by profound meditation, and abstraction from the world, the solitary soul may attain some slender knowledge of the essence of these pure spirits; and imbibe some portion of their tranquillity and happiness. He asserts, in various places, consistently with the doctrine of species or effluences developed in Book iv. that effigies of these divinities are perpetually flowing from their persons. In Book v. 1192, he expressly declares that mankind, in the commencement of the world, before the mind was distracted by an infinitude of cares and occupations, traced these effigies not unfrequently amidst their solitary musings, and were conscious of their presence in their midnight dreams. And he informs us, in many places, that Epicurus was much accustomed to such religious abstractions; and that by such abstractions he became divinely illuminated. The whole system, indeed, bears the most obvious resemblance, as I have before observed, to that of Milton in his Paradise Lost, excepting that Lucretius, far from assigning to his divinities the superintendance of the planets, represents them as totally unaffected by every transaction that occurs. For a farther account of this system, the reader may consult the prefixed life of our poet.

Epicurus, however, was not the only philosopher of ancient Greece who admitted the existence of such an order of secondary gods as is here referred to. Plato allowed the same, and apparently to a much greater extent in point of number. Like Epicurus, moreover, he conceived that, although they were the production of the supreme and ineffable principle, they were at the same time self-existent, and independent. Between the two propositions, of creation and self-existence, there seems indeed to be no small degree of discrepancy: but how far the attributes of self-existence and independence may be bestowed on any order of created beings, by the Creator himself, it is not perhaps for our limited capacities to ascertain completely. It is sufficient to observe, on the present occasion, that several of the Greek philosophers appear to have imagined that it was not only possible but actual.

Semota ab nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe ;
Nam, privata dolore omni, privata periclis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur irâ.]
Humana ante oculos fede quom vita jaceret
In terris, obpressa gravi sub Religione ;
Quæ caput a cœli regionibus obtendebat,
Horribili super adspectu mortalibus instans ;
Primum Graius homo mortaleis tollere contra
Est oculos ausus, primusque obsistere contra :

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Ver. 62. *Vice no revenge, no rapture virtue prompts.*] This verse has given great offence to many of the commentators, who appear to have been incapable of separating the idea of the immortals, whom our poet supposes to exist, like the angels or archangels of the christian system, in the possession of all felicity, but nevertheless as secondary powers alone, from the idea of one eternal and intelligent First Cause. Lanctantius, therefore, bursts forth into the following animadversion upon what he erroneously conceived to be its tendency: Dissolvitur autem religio si credamus Epicuro illa dicenti. De Ir. Dis. 8. "All religion "vanishes from us the moment we credit this pro- "position of Epicurus." But, independently of this conception relative to their blessed or immaterial spirits, the Epicureans never believed that the Deity, or great First Cause himself, at any time, interfered with the moral world; since such an interference would, in their opinion, have been at once subversive of the free-agency of the mind, and have reduced mankind to so many passive machines. Epicurus, says a writer who was well versed in his system, taught, that whatever relates to moral actions, God never attempts to controul, but only what relates to the nature of the physical world: και Επικουρος κατ' αυτους, ὁ μεν πρὸς τους πολλους απολειπει θεον, ὡς δε προς την φυσιν των πραγματων ευδαιμως. Sext. Empiric. adv. Matth. p. 319. See also, on this subject, the note on Book ii. v. 661, of this poem, where this same line is repeated.

Ver. 63. ——*the gloomy power*
*Of* Superstition *swayed,*——] The word here translated *superstition* is in the original *religio*, and has generally, to the present time, been rendered by the translators of our poet in every language, *religion*. Even Marchetti has followed the common example.

Giacea l'umana vita oppressa e stanca
Sotto *religion* grave e severa.

And much odium has been thrown upon the Roman bard, for the impiety he is here supposed to exhibit. But without minutely entering at present into the theology of the Epicureans, it is obvious, from the instance he shortly afterwards adduces,—that, I mean, of the sacrifice of Iphigenia,—that the religion to which he immediately adverts is the superstitious tenets and practices that were popular among his own countrymen, and the pagan world at large. And surely there could be no impiety in ridiculing such a senseless mass of religion as this; since atheism itself must have been far less impious than the doctrines it inculcated.

It is but just, however, to observe that Evelyn

Estrang'd for ever. There, nor pain pervades,
Nor danger threatens; every passion sleeps;
Vice no revenge, no rapture virtue prompts.

Not thus Mankind. Them long the tyrant power
Of Superstition sway'd, uplifting proud
Her head to heaven, and with horrific limbs
Brooding o'er earth; till he, the man of Greece,
Auspicious rose, who first the combat dar'd,
And broke in twain the monster's iron rod.

---

has translated the passage more accurately, and forms the only exception to the remark just made, among the interpreters in our own language.

Whilst sometimes human life dejected lay
On earth, under gross *superstition's* sway.

The Baron de Coutures, in his French version, has also adopted the term; and Voltaire, in adverting to the incident which comprises the episode that immediately follows, and whose verses the reader will find quoted in the note on ver. 110 of this book, with perhaps more emphasis still, has employed the term *fanaticism;* a passion which he correctly personifies, and represents as the *unnatural* offspring of religion, the immediate source of every barbarous and inhuman rite. Henriade, chant. v.

Ver. 66. ——*till he, the man of Greece,*
*Auspicious rose, who first the combat dar'd,*] Epicurus,—the founder of the sect of philosophers who were called by his name, and whose system forms the subject of the present poem. This great and virtuous man has been more unjustly calumniated than perhaps any man that ever existed. The purity of his moral precepts were unexceptionable; and his own mode of living, instead of having led, as it is generally represented, to every species of impiety and debauchery, was uniformly coincident with them, and hence at all times most chaste and temperate. His attachment to his country was most ardent; and his piety most exemplary. In life, and in death, he was a pattern well worthy the imitation of mankind in every age and country. Epicurus was born in the 109th olympiad, the 3d year from the death of Plato. He was, as we learn from Diogenes, the son of Neocles and Chœrestrata, of the illustrious family of the Philaides at Athens. At the age of eighteen, he commenced his philosophic studies in this renowned city, about the era of the death of Alexander, and the meridian life and splendour of Xenocrates and Aristotle. Having acquired a high celebrity for intelligence and profound research, he instituted at Athens, when about the age of thirty, a new school, and propounded to crowded audiences his own more simple system. For the great outlines of this he was indebted to Leucippus and Democritus, the oldest philosophers of the atomic class. Many of the principles of these earlier sages, however, he totally discarded; and added, at the same time, several to the original system. For a farther account of his life, his frugality, and virtue, I refer the reader to the biography of Lucretius prefixed to this poem. Epicurus died of an inflammation from a stone in the bladder, in the 127th olympiad, and the 72d year of his age.

Quem neque fana deûm, nec fulmina, nec minitanti
Murmure compressit cœlum; sed eo magis acrem
Inritât animi virtutem, ecfringere ut arta
Naturæ primus portarum claustra cupiret.
Ergo vivida vis animi pervicit, et extra
Processit longe flammantia mœnia mundi;
Atque omne inmensum peragravit mente animoque:
Unde refert nobis victor, quid possit oriri,
Quid nequeat; finita potestas denique quoique
Quâ nam sit ratione, atque alte terminus hærens.
Quâ re Religio, pedibus subjecta, vicissim
Obteritur, nos exæquat victoria cœlo.
Illud in hiis rebus vereor, ne forte rearis
Inpia te rationis inire elementa, viamque
Indugredi sceleris; quod contra sæpius illa
Religio peperit scelerosa atque inpia facta.
Aulide quo pacto Triviaï virginis aram
Iphianassaï turparunt sanguine fede
Ductores Danaûm delecti, prima virorum:

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Ver. 73. ——*the flaming walls*
*Of heav'n to scale,*——] It is by this appellation our poet beautifully describes the etherial or superior portion of the atmosphere of the mundane system, which bounds, as with a sapphire wall, the whole of its vast contents. For a more full and philosophic meaning, however, of this expression, the reader may turn to note on ver. 1112 of the present book. Gray has obviously imitated this verse of Lucretius, in his Progress of Poesy:

He passed the *flaming bounds* of place and time.

No thunder him, no fell revenge pursu'd
Of heaven incens'd, or deities in arms.
Urg'd rather, hence, with more determin'd soul,
To burst through Nature's portals, from the crowd
With jealous caution clos'd; the flaming walls
Of heaven to scale, and dart his dauntless eye,
Till the vast whole beneath him stood display'd.
Hence taught he us, triumphant, what might spring,
And what forbear: what powers inherent lurk,
And where their bounds, and issues. And, hence, we,
Triumphant, too, o'er Superstition rise,
Contemn her terrors, and unfold the heavens.
Nor deem the truths Philosophy reveals
Corrupt the mind, or prompt to impious deeds.
No: Superstition may, and nought so soon,
But Wisdom never. Superstition 'twas
Urg'd the fell Grecian Chiefs, with virgin blood,
To stain the virgin altar. Barbarous deed!
And fatal to their laurels! Aulis saw,
For there Diana reigns, th' unholy rite.
Around she look'd; the pride of Grecian maids,

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And Milton, at least equally impressed with its beauty, has dilated upon it as follows:

Far off th' empyreal heaven extended wide,
With opal towers, and battlements adorn'd,
Of living sapphire.

Par. Lost, ii. 1047.

Ver. 89. *Around she look'd; the pride of Grecian maids,*] This little episode is well selected, and inimitably related. On the subject it is designed to exemplify, it is altogether to the point. It was a story well known to the world, from the time of Homer to Euripedes, from whom Lucretius has bor-

Quoi simul infula, virgineos circumdata comptus,
Ex utrâque pari malarum parte profusa est ;

rowed many of his most delicate touches. But he has given the entire tale a different, and, in my judgment, a more natural action, as well as one more consistent with the narration of the best historians. Instead of painting that sorrow and affliction of mind which our poet has here so correctly delineated, Euripedes gives the unfortunate princess the character of a heroine, voluntarily offering herself as a victim for the good of her country, and of Greece at large.

The Greek tragedian has also introduced a different termination, and represented the fair victim as removed by a miracle from the sacred grove, at the moment she was on the point of being immolated, and her place supplied by a deer, provided by Diana in her stead: in which latter fiction he has been followed by Ovid, in his Metamorphoses, book xii. This story is generally supposed to be derived from that of Jephtha, so pathetically related in the book of Judges; and from the resemblance of the names, as also from Jephtha's having lived at the era of the siege of Troy, it is probable both memoirs are derived from one common source. The sacred historian, however, coincides in the catastrophe introduced by Lucretius, and represents the unhappy victim as actually sacrificed: but he agrees with Euripedes, in attributing to her the heroism of a voluntary surrender. The following is the description of the Grecian dramatist, which, though highly beautiful, is not superior to that of our own poet:

Επει γαρ ικομεσθα της Διος κορης
Αρτεμιδος αλσος, λειμακας τ' ανθηφορους
Ἵν' ην Αχαιων συλλογος στρατευματος,
Σην παιδ' αγοντες, ευθυρ Αργειων οχλος
Ηθροιζεθ'. ὡς δ' εσειδεν' Αγαμεμνων αναξ
Επι σφαγας στειχουσαν εις αλσος κορης,
Ανεσ' εναζε, καμπαλιν στρεψας καρα,
Δακρυα προηγεν ομματων, πεπλον προθεις,
Ἡ δε, σταθεισα τῳ τεκουτι πλησιον,
Ελεξε τοιαδ', ὦ πατερ παρειμι σοι.
Τουμον δε σωμα της εμης ὑπερ πατρας,
Και της απασης Ἑλλαδος γαιας ὑπερ.
Θυσαι δίδωμ' εκουσα, προς βωμον θεας
Αγοντας, ειπερ εστι θεσφατον τοδε.

Soon as we reach'd the grove and flowery mead
Of Dian, where your daughter was conducted
By a detachment of the Grecian troops,
The host collected instantly around;
But Agamemnon, soon as he beheld
The virgin at the sacred grove arrive,
Where she was doom'd to bleed, groan'd deeply, turn'd
His head aside, then wept and veil'd his eyes
Beneath his robe. Close to her sire she stood,
And said, "My father, I with joy attend
"Thy summons, freely for my native land,
"And for all Greece, devote myself to bleed;
"Conduct me to the altar of the goddess;
"Because Heaven's awful voice hath thus requir'd.
"Through me may ye be blest, through me obtain
"The glorious palm of conquest, and return
"To your exulting country."

Wodhull.

The fable is undoubtedly well calculated for dramatic representation; and the moderns have had recourse to it almost as frequently as the ancients. The corresponding drama of Buchanan, as derived more immediately from the account given in the sacred Scriptures, is entitled "Jephthes:" but in his catastrophe he has equally departed from his own copy, as well as from Lucretius; following the footsteps and peripætia of Euripides and Ovid. In his elegant description of his heroine, however, whom he denominates Iphis, he has been chiefly indebted to our own poet, having minutely copied almost every trait in the text before us. Iphis, in the drama of Buchanan, having taken a pathetic farewel of her parents, in which she alludes to her own maturity of age, and the bridal hopes that had so lately surrounded her, is thus exquisitely painted, on the very verge of fate:

The lovely Iphigenia, round she look'd,— 90
Her lavish tresses, spurning still the bond
Of sacred fillet, flaunting o'er her cheeks,—

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Quum staret aras ante tristis victima,
Jam destinata virgo, purpureum decus
Per alba fudit ora virgineus pudor,
Cœtus viriles intuerier insolens;
Ut si quis Indum purpura violet ebur,
Rosasve niveis misceat cum liliis.
Sed se per ora cum pudore fuderat
Perspicua certè juncta vis fiduciæ,
Interque flentes sola fletibus carens,
Metu remisso constitit firma, ac sui
Secura fati: quas tenebat lachrymas
Propinqua morti virgo, populus non tenet.
Alium parentis beneficium recens movet,
Et servitutis patriæ exemptum jugum,
Et solitudo familiæ clarissimæ.
Alius acerbam sortis ingemuit vicem,
Longoque luctu, breve redemptum gaudium,
Raroque stabilem rebus in lætis fidem.
Florem juventæ deflet ille, et siderum
Similes ocellos, æmulamque auro comam,
Supraque sexum pectoris constantiam.
Et forte solito gratiorem afflaverat
Natura honorem, ceu supremo munere
Dignata funus nobilis viraginis.
Ut jam ruentis æquor in Tartessium
Phœbi recedens esse gratior solet
Splendor, rosæque vere supremo halitus
Colorque cupidus detinet oculos magis:
Sic virgo fati stat supremo in limine
Parata morti.

As near the altar stood the victim sad,
The destin'd maid,—o'er either cheek so chaste
Spread the wide blush of modesty—unwont
Thus to be compass'd by the throngs of men.
So o'er the iv'ry flows the clear carmine,
So roses oft with snow-white lillies blend.
But, with the virgin blush, spread too the power,
O'er all her visage, of triumphant faith.
Firm stood she, fearless of her fate; with eye
Down-cast and tearless; tearless she alone
At this dread hour, while all around her wept.
Some urg'd her sire's heroic deeds of late,
Our country freed from bondage by his arms,
Himself now childless, and his race extinct.
These sigh'd, full deep, o'er fortune's cruel course!
How short is bliss, though bought with endless grief!
How all unstable every joy of man!
While those her flower of youth deplor'd—her eyes
Radiant as stars, her hair that rivall'd gold,
And the firm courage that her sex excell'd:
While happly Nature, with superior charms
Had thus endow'd her at the last sad hour,
To prove how fair an offering she could boast.
As seems the sun more precious, when at eve
His last look trembles o'er the western waves,
And sweeter smells the rose, and lovelier far
Unfolds its blossoms, when the spring retires:
So on the threshold of impending fate
Stood she, prepar'd for death.

The best dramatic piece I have ever met with, derived from the same source, next to this of Buchanan, is Racine's. It is modelled for the modern stage, and has often been exhibited with success. Euripedes is the entire source from which the French poet has drawn his characters. He has considerably, however, changed that of Achilles; but the piece derives no benefit from the alteration. With the former, the Grecian hero is neither a lover of Iphigenia, nor has ever entertained an idea of marrying her. A report to this effect is indeed determined upon, in a council of the Grecian chiefs, at which Achilles was not present, but merely to obtain the consent of Clytemnestra, the mother of Iphigenia, to her daughter's being conveyed to Aulis; where both the ladies, agreeably to the directions sent them, arrive shortly afterwards; and, on meeting with Achilles, accost him in the character they conceived he was sustaining. A mutual and excessive surprize succeeds: for Achilles had not even heard of the stratagem by

Et mœstum simul ante aras adstare parentem
Sensit, et hunc propter ferrum celerare ministros, 90

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which Iphigenia was thus decoyed. Without having any design of uniting himself with her, he nevertheless quarrels most vehemently with the whole synod of Grecian chiefs, for thus presuming to employ his name on so base an occassion; and advises, but unsuccessfully, to set sail without offering so precious a sacrifice.

Racine, on the contrary, has made Achilles a most violent admirer of Iphigenia, and represents their marriage as on the point of being solemnized, at the very moment when Calchas, the priest, announces the fatal demand of Diana. He represents, also, Iphigenia as resolved, at all adventures, notwithstanding the delirious affection of Achilles, and her own anterior vows of attachment, to submit heroically to the doom decreed her: nor is she to be deterred from self-consecration by the sighs of her mother, or the frantic declarations of the Grecian chieftain, who threatens, if she suffer herself to be thus destroyed, and the gods be panting for human blood, that he will immediately afterwards immolate the priest who is to sacrifice her, and even her own father, by whose consent alone she is to suffer. There is more rant, indeed, in this speech than Racine is in the habit of introducing:

Si de sang et de morts le ciel est affamé
Jamais de plus de sang ses autels n'ont flammé.
A mon aveugle amour tout sera legitime:
Le prêtre deviendra la première victime:
Le bûcher, par mes mains detruit et renversé,
Dans le sang des bourreaux nagera dispersé.
Et si, dans les horreurs de ce désordre extreme,
Votre père frappé tombe, et perit lui-même,
Alors, de vos respects, voyant les tristes fruits,
Reconnoissez les coups que vous aurez conduits.

Such is the opposite and irreconcileable difference between the bombast of inflated and unnatural passion, and the plain, unvarnished narration of Lucretius. Achilles, however, in the Iphigenia of Racine, is fortunately excused from committing this terrible carnage, by the well-known substitute of a deer: for, as the victim is on the immediate point of being sacrificed, the priest becomes filled with a divine and secret dread, the heavens are loaded with signs and wonders, and this other and more pertinent victim is instantly disclosed.

A tragedy on the same subject was written, a few years afterwards, in France, by Le Clerc, assisted by his friend Coras. This dramatic composition I have never had an opportunity of reading; but either its intrinsic merit was but small, or the envy of Racine was very great on the occasion, since he gave himself the trouble of writing the following epigram on its appearance:

Entre Le Clerc et son ami Coras,
Deux grands auteurs, rimant de compagnie,
N'a pas long tems s'ourdirent grands debats
Sur le propos de leur Iphigenie.
Coras lui dit: "La piece est de mon cru."
Le Clerc repond: "Elle est mienne, et non votre."
Mais aussitôt que la piece eut paru,
Plus n'ont voulu l'avoir fait l'un, ni l'autre.

Le Clerc and Coras, who in partnership rhym'd,
Iphigenia who wrote with such spirit,
When the drama was done, had a strife most ill-tim'd,
On deciding whose chief was the merit.
"'Tis all mine," said Coras.——"To say so is a fraud,"
Cried Le Clerc, "for I wrote it myself."
But at length when the bantling was usher'd abroad,
Then neither would own the poor elf.

This story is as well calculated for painting as for poetry; and forms the subject of one of the best pieces which has flowed from the pen of Sir Joshua Reynolds: the colouring of which is after the Venetian school, and exhibits one of its happiest copies. Its rival, Jephtha's Vow, has been selected not less frequently. Perhaps, the best picture from this latter episode is Mr. Opie's; but, like almost every prior attempt, it is altogether spoiled by the painter's

And sought, in vain, protection. She survey'd
Near her, her sad, sad sire; th' officious priests
Repentant half, and hiding their keen steel, 95

throwing a veil over the eyes of the young and beautiful oblation, by which half her charms, and more than half the effect of the subject, is unmercifully destroyed. Among the Greeks there was a most celebrated picture from the tale of Iphigenia, by Timantes, of which Cicero has given us a particular description. Chalcas, Ulysses, Menelaus, and several other personages, were introduced into the scenery, with countenances of great grief and commiseration. The painter, having thus exhausted his art, was at a loss how to express the superior agony of the father; and, with a stratagem somewhat similar to the above, concerning which he has been often complimented, but the idea of which was obviously borrowed from Euripedes, he threw a veil carelessly over his face; "quoniam," as Cicero has elegantly expressed it, "summum illum luctum "pencillo non posset imitari." In Orat.—"Be-"cause no art of the pencil could delineate the ex-"treme grief he endured." These tricks of the profession are, in my apprehension, at all times beneath the dignity of a man of real genius; and bespeak poverty of imagination rather than modesty in the artist.

Ver. 93. ——*She survey'd*
*Near her, her sad, sad sire; th' officious priests*
*Repentant half, and hiding their keen steel,*] I must inform the English reader, that the term *propter* in the original may be translated either as a preposition of *motive*, or of *place*; or, in other words, that the version may be rendered—"She perceived "the priests conceal the knife *near* her father," or "*on account of* her father." Evelyn, and Creech who has closely copied him, have both pretended to descry a peculiar degree of force and emphasis in the last lection;—in the concealment of the knife *on account of* the father. I have chosen to consider the preposition, however, as referring to *place* alone, independently of *motive*; and that for the following reasons: 1st, It is Iphigenia herself, and not her father, who stands most advanced in the fore-ground of this elegant groupe. She is in every respect the first figure, and he but a second. The poet, true to the feelings of nature, delineates her as fully sensible of the blessings of life, as well as of youth, and the horror of the doom to which she is devoted,—and devoted too by her father's consent. He has amassed together, in the most exquisite and pathetic colours, every circumstance that can tend to depict the agony of her mind, and excite the compassion of the crowd around her. The people pity her; her father pities her; the priests pity her: and while they conceal the sacrificing knife——*on whose account* do they conceal it? Doubtless on her own.—*Near* the father, but *on account of* the daughter. To read the passage otherwise is to destroy half the spirit of the episode. The version of Evelyn and Creech may apply to the tale as related by Euripides, but not as related by Lucretius.

But, 2dly, all our best annotators, translators and expositors, have adopted this very interpretation of the preposition which I have given myself. The verb that follows ought, I think, to be *celare*; and, following the greater number of copies, I have so rendered it in the translation. In the edition of Giffanius, however, in that of Bologna, and in that of Mr. Wakefield, as printed on the opposite page, it is *celerare*, "to brandish," instead of "to conceal." But those who prefer *celerare*, must necessarily use *propter* in the sense offered in the text; for, "to "brandish the knife *because* of the father," would be nonsense. Coutures who, with myself, has retained *celare*, has also retained *propter* in my own signification. "Elle vit," says he, "son père devant "l'autel, elle s'apperçut que les ministres qui etoient "*proches de lui*, cachoient le coteau sacré." Precisely to the same effect is the elegant version of Marchetti, who is the only poet, in any nation, by whom Lucretius has hitherto been worthily translated.

Adspectuque suo lacrumas ecfundere civeis;
Muta metu, terram, genibus submissa, petebat:
Nec miseræ prodesse in tali tempore quibat,
Quod patrio princeps donârat nomine regem:
Nam, sublata virûm manibus, tremebundaque, ad aras
Deducta est; non ut, solemni more sacrorum
Perfecto, posset claro comitari hymenæo;
Sed, casta inceste, nubendi tempore in ipso,
Hostia concideret mactatu mœsta parentis,
Exitus ut classi felix faustusque daretur.
Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum!

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Vid' ella a se davante in mesto volto
Il padre, e *a lui vicini* i sacerdoti
Celar l'aspra bipenne.

In the interpretation I have given to this passage, I am equally justified therefore by natural propriety, and the opinion of the best critics who have preceded me.

Ver. 101. ——*vain that first herself*
*Lisp'd the dear name of Father, eldest born.*] Nothing can be more unfaithful to the original, or more inconsistent with the sentiment our poet is endeavouring to inculcate, than Coutures' version of this beautiful passage. He is protesting against the cruel effects of superstition among his countrymen, and not their laxity of parental affection: against the sacrilegious demands of their priests, and not the severity of their patriarchs. True to the genuine feelings of nature, he represents the sufferings of Agamemnon as extreme: he stood, as it should appear, overcome with grief by the side of his daughter; and nothing but the stern demand of a sanguinary oracle, which he dared not disobey, could obtain his consent to the sacrifice. Yet Coutures has represented him as a monster, void of all parental feeling; not irresistibly enforced, but self-determined to offer up his daughter, and peremptorily resolved that no entreaties should dissuade him from so sanguinary an oblation. "It was in vain," says he, "that she attempted *to soften the king*, by calling him "her father: she was seized by pitiless hands, and "carried trembling to the foot of the altar." C'etoit en vain qu'elle s'efforçoit *d'attendrir le roi* en l'appellant son père; elle fut arrachée par des mains impitoyables, et menée tremblante aux pieds des autels, &c.

And crowds of gazers weeping as they view'd.
Dumb with alarm, with supplicating knee,
And lifted eye, she sought compassion still;
Fruitless and unavailing: vain her youth,
Her innocence, and beauty; vain the boast
Of regal birth; and vain that first herself
Lisp'd the dear name of Father, eldest born.
Forc'd from her suppliant posture, straight she view'd
The altar full prepar'd: not there to blend
Connubial vows, and light the bridal torch;
But, at the moment when mature in charms,
While Hymen call'd aloud, to fall, e'en then,
A father's victim, and the price to pay
Of Grecian navies, favoured thus with gales.—
Such are the crimes that Superstition prompts!

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Klopstock, however, has been far more sensible of the beauty and pathos of this admirable picture; and, with no small felicity, has transplanted it into the second book of the Messias. It occurs in the solitary meditation of the repentant Abbadona, when he had first deserted his infernal companions. It is thus he addresses the Almighty:

O dürft' ich es wagen,
Ohne zu zittern, ihn schöpfer zu nennen, wie gerne wollt' ich
Dann entbehren den zärtlichen vaternahmen, mit dem ihn
Seine getruen, die hohen engel, kindlicher nennen.

Oh! without trembling, dar'd I this dread judge
But call *Creator*, freely would I now
Yield *the dear name of father, name belov'd*,
And still pronounc'd by those who ne'er transgress'd.

Ver. 110. *Such are the crimes that* Superstition *prompts!*] The translators have generally, as before observed, employed the term *religion*, instead of *superstition*, to interpret the *religio* of Lucretius. I have given my reasons for deviating from the common example, in the note on verse 63 of this book. The cardinal Polignac, following the general, but erroneous interpretation, has deemed it necessary, in his Anti-Lucretius, to inform us that the poet whom he opposes was mistaken: that this, and other equally barbarous transactions, were not the effect of *religion*, but of *impiety*; as though impiety were not the very subject he meaned to object against,—called, indeed, but falsely, religion, by the general mass of his contemporaries. The following is the cardinal's allusion to the episode before us:

Effera tantum igitur potuit suadere malorum
*Impietas*, non *Religio*; quæ prava coercens

Tutemet a nobis jam quovis tempore, vatum
Terriloquis victus dictis, desciscere quæres.
Quippe et enim quam multa tibi jam fingere possum
Somnia, quæ vitæ rationes vortere possint,
Fortunasque tuas omneis turbare timore.
Et merito: nam, si certam finem esse viderent
Ærumnarum homines, aliquâ ratione valerent
Religionibus atque minis obsistere vatum:
Nunc ratio nulla est restandi, nulla facultas;
Æternas quoniam pœnas in morte timendum.

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Corda metu, spe recta fovet; cunctisque suum jus
Spondet, et humanas vetat obbrutescere mentes.
Quod si ductores Danaûm, Calchante magistro,
Tentârunt fato lachrymabilis Iphianassæ
(Grande nefas) classi celeres arcessere ventos,
Ac læsum ultricis numen placare Dianæ,
Non hæc vera dei Reverentia; fecit
Cæca Superstitio, et vani fallacia vatis.
Sed talis nunquam immites cecidisset ad aras
Hostia, vesani dira ambitione parentis
Jussa mori. . Lib. I.

*Impiety* alone persuades to ills,
*Religion* never. She, coercing strong
The heart deprav'd, with fear,—with ardent hope
Sustains the good: deep in the conscious breast
Her laws she stamps, benign alike to each.
What though the Grecian chiefs, at Calchas' nod,
Strove with the blood (a deed unjust and dire!)
Of Iphigenia, maid lamented long,
T' excite the gales, and calm Diana's wrath,
That fettered all their navy—Reverence this
Urg'd not, to God most due, but priests deceiv'd,
And *Superstition* vain. At his mild shrine
No human victim falls; no father there,
Mad with ambition, wipes his crimes away,
Lav'd by a daughter's blood.

This dreadful and barbarous rite of offering human victims to heaven was not, however, confined to the Greeks. There are but few nations, and unfortunately but few religions, that can plead a total exemption from such an impious custom, in any age. I have already observed, in note on verse 63, that Voltaire has attributed the savage ceremony, in whatever era, and under whatever religion it occurred, to *fanaticism*, whom he has most appropriately personified, and followed in his bloody course over the greater part of the globe. There is so much truth and beauty in his delineation, as well as immediate reference to the episode before us, that it would be inexcusable in me not to offer its perusal to my readers. It occurs in his Henriade, l. iv.

Il vient, le *Fanatisme* est son horrible nom,
Enfant dénaturé de la religion;
Armé pour la défendre, il cherche à la détruire,
Et reçu dans son sein, l'embrasse, et la déchire.
C'est lui qui dans Raba, sur le bords de l'Arnon

And dost thou still resist us? trusting still
The fearful tales by priests and poets told?—
I, too, could feign such fables; and combine
As true to fact, and of as potent spell,
To freeze thy blood, and harrow every nerve.—
Nor wrong th' attempt. Were mortal man assur'd
Eternal death would close this life of woe,
And nought remain of curse beyond the grave,
E'en then religion half its force would lose;
Vice no alarm, and virtue feel no hope.
But, whilst the converse frights him, man will dread
Eternal pain, and flee from impious deeds.

---

Guidait les descendans du malheureux Ammon,
Quand à Moloc, leur dieu, des mères gémissantes,
Offraient de leurs enfans les entrailles fumantes.
Il dicta de Jephté le serment inhumain;
Dans le cœur de sa fille il conduisit sa main.
C'est lui qui, de Calchas ouvrant la bouche impie,
Demanda par sa voix, la mort d'Iphigénie.
France, dans les forêts, il habita long-temps,
A l'affreux Teutates il offrit ton encens.
Tu n'as point oublié ces sacrés homicides,
Qu' à tes indignes dieux présentaient tes Druïdes.
Du haut du Capitole criait aux Païens,
" Frappez, exterminez, déchirez les Chretiens."
Mais lorsqu'au fils de Dieu Rome enfin fut soumise,
Du Capitole en cendre, il passa dans l'eglise:
Et dans les cœur Chrétiens inspirant ses fureurs,
De martyrs qu'ils étaient, les fit persécuteurs.
Dans Londres, il a formé la secte turbulente,
Qui sur un roi trop faible a mis sa main sanglante.
Dans Madrid, dans Lisbonne, il allume ces feux,
Ces bûchers solemnels, où des Juifs malheureux
Sont tous les ans en pompe envoyés par des prêtres,
Pour n'avoir point quitté la foi de leurs ancêtres.

He comes—Fanaticism, his name abhorr'd,
Religion's monster-offspring; clasp'd in mail,
Her weal he simulates, but works her woe,
And, in her lap, embraces and destroys.
'Twas he in Raba, Arnon's banks beside,
Led the fierce Ammonites, when, at the shrine
Of bloody Moloch, mothers, whelm'd with grief,
Offer'd the smoaking entrails of their babes.
His was th' inhuman oath by Jephtha sworn;
He, 'gainst the daughter, rais'd the father's hand.
When Calchas op'd his impious lips, 'twas he
Th' oblation urg'd of Iphigenia fair.
With thee, O France! long dwelt he; and thy groves
Claim'd for Teutates, claim'd with incense foul,
And Druid rites, remember'd still with dread.
He, from the Capitol's proud summit, cri'd,
" Strike!" to the Pagans—" let no Christian live!"
But when imperial Rome the cross ador'd,
Her tower in ashes, he the Christians join'd,
And made of martyrs persecutors fell.
He fir'd th' enthusiast sect, that to the block,
In London, led a prince too weak for sway:
Lit in Madrid, in Lisbon lit the fires,

Ignoratur enim, quæ sit natura animaï;
Nata sit, an contra nascentibus insinuetur;
Et simul intereat nobis cum, morte dirempta,
An tenebras Orci visat, vastasque lacunas;
An pecudes alias divinitus insinuet se,
Ennius ut noster cecinit, qui primus amœno
Detulit ex Helicone perenni frunde coronam,
Per genteis Italas hominum quæ clara clueret.

The solemn butcheries, that, year by year,
Wait the vext race of Jews, by priests condemn'd,
For stern adherence to their fathers' creed.

Ver. 123. *Yet doubtful is the doctrine, and unknown,* &c.] As there is no subject that can be of so much importance to man as a future existence, there is none which has more fully occupied the attention of the meditative and the learned, in every age. The existence itself, the mode of existence, its duration, or interchange, are points that have been agitated and discussed in every possible variety of shape. And what, after all, is the result?—that just as much is now known, by the mere light of reason, as was known above two thousand years ago, when Lucretius wrote his poem. In effect, although of infinite importance, the subject scarcely admits of argumentation of any kind. Of matter, we can discern but little: of immaterial spirit, nothing at all. We have no physical data to reason from; at least, none that will advance us beyond the bounds of probability: and every moral consideration is equally as inconclusive. Hence Cicero, Plato, and many other sages of antiquity, have expressly declared, that the more they meditated on this profound subject, the more their doubts of a future state were increased: while Democritus, Epicurus, Solomon (as it should seem from the general tenor of his writings, and especially his Ecclesiastes, chap. ii. 15, 16. iii. 18, 19, 20), as well as the entire body of the Sadducean sect, disbelieved it altogether. It is an object of *revelation*, therefore, rather than of *reason;* and a most illustrious object it is, and completely worthy of the intervention of the Divinity. And without searching further for motives, the Christian philosopher, in the belief of this important truth alone, finds a *dignus vindice nodus*, a motive amply sufficient to justify an immediate communication from the Creator to mankind. See the prefixed life of Lucretius.

Ver. 125. *The soul first lives, when lives the body first,*] In the prosecution of this poem, which comprises a complete history of the philosophy of the ancients, I shall have frequent occasion to examine the different systems of opinions that are here enumerated; and to compare them with many which have been started, under the semblance of novelty, in times much more modern. At present I shall content myself with observing, that the opinion conveyed in this, and the preceding line, was that of Democritus, Thales, Epicurus, Empedocles, and a variety of other sages, who differed, nevertheless, very widely, in many other doctrines of their respective theories.

Yet doubtful is the doctrine, and unknown
Whether, co-eval with th' external frame,
The soul first lives, when lives the body first,
Or boasts a date anterior: whether doom'd
To common ruin, and one common grave,
Or through the gloomy shades, the lakes, the caves,
Of Erebus to wander: or, perchance,
As Ennius taught, immortal bard, whose brows
Unfading laurels bound, and still whose verse
All Rome recites, entranc'd—perchance condemn'd

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Ver. 126. *Or boasts a date anterior:*—] Plato, in various parts of his Dialogues, seems to have imagined that the soul exists from all eternity, and continues waiting in some distant star till the moment of the formation of its appropriate body, with which it then immediately unites itself, and continues in a state of intimate connection, till, at length, it is once more separated by death; when, according to its degree of moral merit, it is sentenced to Erebus or Elysium. Pythagoras believed, with Plato, that souls were of eternal existence, and, of course, incorporeal; but that upon the dissolution of one body, in which they were placed, they constantly transmigrated to another, as well to the body of brutes as of men. This doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, is of immemorial date, and was equally believed by the Hindus and the Egyptians; from the last of whom Pythagoras probably received it, during his travels into Asia. It was not, however, confined either to Egypt, Hindustan, or Greece; for we find it equally credited, at an early age, in China, and among the Celts in general; and particularly among those of Britain and Gaul. It is hence supposed, by Mr. Davies, to have constituted a common topic of belief among mankind, even in the first post-diluvian century; for to an epoch thus early does he refer the Celtic and Druidic colonizations of Spain and Britain. These, however, are learned and ingenious conceptions, rather than facts of solid and applicable proof. The reader may amuse himself with such, and various other opinions, in this elaborate writer's volume of "Celtic Researches." It appears, from verse 133, that Ennius himself had, at some period of his life, inclined to a belief in the metempsychosis; though, at another period, he seems to have changed his opinion.

Ver. 126. ——*whether doom'd*
*To common ruin, and one common grave,* &c.] Thus Mr. Cowper, in his beautiful and descriptive poem, "The Task."

> Has man within him an immortal soul?
> Or does the tomb take all? If he survive
> His ashes—where? and in what weal or woe?
>
> B. ii.

Ver. 130. *As* Ennius *taught, immortal bard,*—] Ennius, the Spencer of the Roman poets, flourished about a century before Lucretius, and was the first who attempted an heroic poem in his native language. It is much to be lamented that we have nothing of his writing transmitted to us, in modern times, but

Et si præterea tamen esse Acherusia templa
Ennius æternis exponit versibus edens:
Quo neque permanent animæ, neque corpora nostra;
Sed quædam simulacra, modis pallentia miris:
Unde, sibi exortam, semper florentis Homeri

a few fragments, and detached sentences, occasionally quoted by authors who were his countrymen. These, however, are generally quoted with an admiration of his abilities; and give us a high opinion of him as a philosopher, if not as a poet. Mr. Wakefield has hazarded a conjecture, that the few lines in this passage of Lucretius, which relate to Ennius, comprize the very words which he himself made use of; but this is conjecture alone. This earliest of the heroic poets of Rome, and who was by birth a Neapolitan, instructed the prætor, Marcus Porcius, in the Greek language, at Sardinia, during the consulate of Titus Quintus Flaminius and S. Ælius Pætus Catus. After the Romans had subdued this island, Cato induced his tutor to reside at Rome, where he died in the 70th year of his age, and was interred in the family tomb of the Scipios, by whom, also, he had been largely patronized. At different periods of his life he wrote a variety of satires, comedies, and tragedies; but his grand poem on the Carthaginian war, comprizing an extent of twelve books, was not concluded till about three years before his death.

Ver. 136. *Of* Acherusian *temples*,—] The word *templa*, in the Latin, is occasionally used by most of the poets to signify any large space or cavity. Thus the fragments of Ennius contain "cærula cœli templa," the cerulean concave of heaven. Thus, again, Terence, in his Eunuch, "templa cœli." And Lucretius employs the same term, in a similar sense, in an almost infinite variety of other places. "Templum," in this respect, seems perfectly synonymous with the Hebrew term "Beth," which, when applied to the Supreme Being, means a temple strictly so called: but, at other times, a house, tent, or excavation of any kind. The Hebrew character, denominated Beth, is a happy symbol, as Mr. Allwood has justly observed, of this idea. It is written ב, and is an excavation, with one end open for the purpose of receiving air.

Ver. 136. ——*where, nor soul*
*Nor body dwells*,——] Whenever, among nations of but small refinement and civilization, the idea is credited, that man is a compound being, possessed of a corporeal body or substratum, and a something incorporeal, superadded to the body, and capable of surviving its dissolution, it, in no instance, occurs to them, that this other substance is itself divisible, and capable of existing in different places, and in different modes of existence, at the same period of time. Pythagoras, who derived much of his instruction from the sages of Egypt, never imagined the human constitution, any more than the brute, to be possessed of more than two constituent principles. It is the common doctrine, if we may credit any of the accounts of travellers and historians, entertained, at this day, among the American Indians, and the inhabitants of New Zealand, and generally among those of the Southern Islands. But this simple division of man into two parts has not satisfied the caprice of all nations, or of all philosophers. Brutes, it has been urged by such persons, have a soul and a body; but man is intrinsically superior to brutes. He must, therefore, possess some essential addition to such a constitution. He must have a reasoning spirit, as well as an animal soul, and a body susceptible of de-

The various tribes of brutes, with ray divine,
To animate and quicken: though the bard,
In deathless melody, has elsewhere sung
Of Acherusian temples, where, nor soul
Nor body dwells, but images of men,
Mysterious shap'd; in wondrous measure wan.

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cay. This is language which has long been entertained, even among Christian writers and philosophers: and in demonstration of its truth, the sacred Scriptures have, not unfrequently, and especially by Grotius and Vitringa, been had recourse to. Yet even here, as in most other concerns which merely depend upon a luxurious imagination, the moderns must decidedly yield to the Greeks; whose popular creed established, for many ages, the existence of four principles, instead of three, in the multifarious constitution of man. Three, indeed, are here enumerated by Lucretius, who has, nevertheless, omitted the umbra, or shade, properly so called, which was supposed to have its constant residence about the tomb or sepulchre, where the body was interred; and was a principle, or substance, altogether different from the ειδωλον, simulacrum, or effigies, which for ever maintained its abode in the lower regions, or, as Ennius has here denominated them, the Acherusian caves; whilst the anima, the soul or spirit, was admitted to be a participant in the Elysian fields. In conformity to this complex idea, Homer has represented Ulysses, during his descent into Tartarus, as conversing with the ειδωλον, or manes of Hercules; while, at the same time, he himself, that is, his soul or spirit, was existing among the gods.

Τον δε μετ', εισενοησα βιην Ηρακληειην,
Ειδωλον· αυτος δε μετ' αθανατοισι θεοισι
Τερπεται εν θαλιης, και Ηρης χρυσοπεδιλου.

Odyss. Λ. 600.

Now I the strength of Hercules behold,
A tow'ring spectre of gigantic mold,
A *shadowy form!* for, high in heaven's abodes
*Himself* resides; a god among the gods.
There, in the bright assemblies of the skies,
He nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.

Pope.

Virgil has represented the very same fact as taking place with respect to Anchises, whose manes, his son, Æneas, conversed with below, while his soul was residing in the upper and blest abodes. Hence the propriety of the following lines, which have been attributed to Ovid:

Bis duo sunt homini: manes, caro, spiritus, umbra:
Quatuor ista loci bis duo suscipiunt.
Terra tegit carnem, tumulum circumvolat umbra,
Orcus habet manes, spiritus astra petit.

Four things are man's—flesh, spirit, ghost, and shade;
And four their final homes:—hell claims the ghost;
The spirit, heaven; in earth the flesh is laid;
And, hov'ring o'er it, seeks the shade its post.

For a farther elucidation of this subject, see note on book iii. verse 100.

Ver. 137. ——*images of men,*] The original is highly picturesque and impressive: "—simulacra, modis pallentia miris." And Virgil has not hesitated to copy the entire verse.

——simulacra modis pallentia miris
Visa sub obscurum noctis.

Georg. i. 477.

Shapes, wondrous pale, by night were seen to rove.

Sotheby.

Conmemorat speciem lacrumas ecfundere salsas
Cœpisse, et rerum naturam expandere dictis.

Quapropter, bene quom superis de rebus habenda
Nobis est ratio; solis lunæque meatus
Quâ fiant ratione, et quâ vi quæque gerantur
In terris; tunc, cum primis, ratione sagaci,
Unde anima atque animi constet natura, videndum:
Et quæ res, nobis vigilantibus obvia, menteis
Terrificet, morbo adfectis, somnoque sepultis;

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Ver. 149. *Whence spring those shadowy forms, which, e'en in hours*
*Wakeful and calm, but chief when dreams molest,*]
This part of the duty incumbent on the philosopher, our poet endeavours to perform in book iv. where the subject is resumed, and discussed in a truly scientific and masterly manner,—consistently, I mean, with the system he has adopted. He there ingeniously assigns the cause why the existence of spectres, ghosts, and apparitions, has been so generally accredited in all ages, and nearly among all nations, as history informs us it has been; and why the night has commonly been the season of their supposed appearance and operation, rather than the day. Thus the ghost in Hamlet:

I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term *to walk the night*,
*And for the day confin'd.*

In the superstitions of all the Northern nations, the same idea is to be traced, so far as relates to the time of apparition. Milton, therefore, with much appropriate beauty, has compared the demon of death to the *night*-hag.

——riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant-blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, *while the lab'ring moon*
*Eclipses* at their charms.

Par. Lost, b. ii.

The rule, indeed, seems to be common to all countries, as well as to all periods; to the East and West, as well as to the North; to the sacred writings, as well as to heathen mythology. It is, hence, the same season of doubt and terror that the sublime author of the book of Job has made choice of, for the appearance of that fearful spectre, which is so inimitably described in chap. iv. of this unrivalled drama, and which has been so often adverted to by men of taste and discernment. Our common translation does not give all the beauties which are contained in the original; and the reader will, therefore, excuse me for offering him a new version, which, at least, has the merit of accuracy, as, I trust, he will find, on comparing it with the following arrangement of the Hebrew:

בשעפים מחזיונות לילה
בנפל תרדמה על־אנשים׃

Here Homer's spectre roam'd, of endless fame
Possest: his briny tears the bard survey'd,
And drank the dulcet precepts from his lips.
Such are the various creeds of men. And hence
The philosophic sage is call'd t' explain,
Not the mere phases of the heavens alone,
The sun's bright path, the moon's perpetual change,
And pow'rs of earth productive, but to point,
In terms appropriate, the dissev'ring lines
'Twixt mind and brutal life; and prove precise
Whence spring those shadowy forms, which, e'en in hours
Wakeful and calm, but chief when dreams molest,

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פחד קראני ורעדה
ורב עצמתי הפחיד:
ורוח על־פני יחלף
תסמר שערת בשרי:
יעמד ולא־אכיר מראהו
תמונה לנגד עיני
דממה וקול אשמע:

'Twas midnight deep; the world was hush'd to rest,
And airy visions every brain possess'd:
O'er all my frame a horror crept severe,
An ice that shiver'd every bone with fear;
Before my face a spirit saw I swim—
Erect uprose my hair o'er every limb:
It stood—the spectre stood—to sight display'd;
Yet trac'd I not the image I survey'd.
'Twas silence dead—no breath the torpor broke,
When thus, in hollow voice, the vision spoke.

No criticism is here necessary. Every one who reads the description must perceive, in every line, some peculiar and appropriate beauty. But the impossibility of tracing or distinguishing the form of the apparition, even whilst it stood motionless before the narrator, and compelled his attention, together with the erection of the hair of the whole body, convey a boldness and originality of thought superlatively impressive. From this fearful picture, Ariosto, Spenser, and Otway, have drawn many of their best and finest paintings. They have all of them, likewise, made choice of solitude and the midnight season for the introduction of their supernatural imagery. But there are some occasions in which a masterly poet, regardless of the trammels of example, may be justified in introducing such scenery at any hour, and even in the presence of the most brilliant or convivial companies. Thus, in the tragedy of Macbeth, the ghost of Banquo suddenly arises in the midst of the entertainment given to the noble thanes; and which, though by Shakspeare denominated a supper, would, in the present day, be regarded as an early dinner, since seven is the hour at which the lords were invited to assemble. The incident is too well known, and its effect too striking, to need any comment. There is one description of a similar incident, however, by which even this of Shakspeare is much ex-

Cernere uti videamur eos, audireque coram,
Morte obitâ quorum tellus amplectitur ossa.
Nec me animi fallit, Graiorum obscura reperta
Difficile inlustrare Latinis versibus esse ;
Multa novis verbis præsertim quom sit agundum
Propter egestatem linguæ, et rerum novitatem :
Sed tua me virtus tamen, et sperata voluptas
Suavis amicitiæ, quemvis efferre laborem
Suadet, et inducit nocteis vigilare serenas,

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ceeded, and whence, perhaps, he took the idea ;— the apparition, I mean, of the fingers of a man's hand writing mystical characters upon the wall, in the palace of Belshazzar, in the midst of the banquet he was giving to all the nobles of his empire, and their ladies. The whole is related with inimitable excellence in the book of Daniel, and comprizes almost every striking circumstance, and every solemn touch, that can render a story impressive. The splendour of the scene, the high rank and number of the company present, the gross impiety and sacrilege they were guilty of, the abruptness of the apparition, the extreme terror and perturbation of the king, and the undaunted probity and resolution of the prophet in decyphering the occult symbols, are all of them most interesting parts of the picture, and harmoniously combine in producing dramatic effect.

The popular mythologies that have most indulged in præternatural appearances of this sort, are those of Odin and Fingal : the former constituting an early creed of the Northern countries on the continent; and the latter, of the inhabitants of Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland. Each of these systems of superstition are possessed of a sublimity and terrible grandeur, far beyond what the mythology of Greece can lay claim to : but there is a savage ferocity attendant upon the former, which is repressive to all the feelings of a cultivated mind. The spirits of the departed, that assemble in the aërial hall of the Scandinavian deity, are represented as fighting and massacring each other for amusement, and as drinking a spirituous beverage out of the hollow skulls of their enemies ·— while the spirits of the Celtic warriors, on the contrary, are delineated as regaling themselves with the hymns of their bards, attuned in praise of love, friendship, or heroism. Often, too, these latter are supposed to be flying on the wings of the winds, to warn those whom they esteem on earth of future dangers, or to protect them beneath the pressure of immediate calamities. Nothing is, therefore, more common than the belief of such benignant apparitions ; nothing more frequent than their introduction in the sublime poems of Ossian : and in the utmost regions of the Highlands, and the Hebrides, the same idea is still interwoven with the profession of the Christian religion, at the present moment. Fingal, however, admitted no supernatural agency into his Celtic creed. It is probable the superstition which he systematized, he originally deduced from the Druids ; but he rejected all their barbarities, and only retained their sacred order of bards, to whom was paid the utmost degree of reverence. The spirit of the Fingalian, immediately upon his decease, took its flight involuntarily to the banks of the river Loda: if virtuous, or heroic, it was there instantaneously met by the ghosts of its forefathers, and conveyed with rapidity to the great hall of the founder of the race, and claimed its seat among the blest ; but if it

Or dire disease, we see, or think we see,
Though the dank grave have long their bones inhum'd.
Yet not unknown to me how hard the task
Such deep obscurities of Greece t' unfold
In Latin numbers; to combine new terms,
And strive with all our poverty of tongue.—
But such thy virtue, and the friendship pure
My bosom bears, that arduous task I dare;
And yield the sleepless night, in hope to cull

---

had been wicked, or a coward, it was suffered to hover for ever on the wretched banks of the Loda, or was condemned to wander on all the winds of heaven; often perversely misleading the way-worn and benighted traveller, in the shape of an *ignis fatuus*.

Respecting the ghosts of the Celtic superstition, there was one remarkable fact, which I cannot avoid noticing in this place. While other religions have often conceived such a kind of etherial spirit as separately existing, immediately after the decease of the body,—the system of Fingal assumed, that the hero had a separate shade or spirit attending him some short time prior to his death, counterfeiting his figure, and appearing to different persons, with the most mournful shrieks, and in the attitude in which he was about to die. "The account given to this "day, among the vulgar," observes Mr. Macpherson, "of this extraordinary matter, is very poetical. "The ghost comes mounted on a meteor, and sur- "rounds twice or thrice the place destined for the "person to die in; and then goes along the road "through which the funeral is to pass, shrieking at "intervals: at last, the meteor and the ghost dis- "appear above the burial place."

Ver. 158. —*that arduous task I dare;*
*And yield the sleepless night*,—] There is a passage in the Abbé Delille's very beautiful, and, in the French language, unrivalled didactic poem of Les Jardins, in the composition of which the poet seems to have had his eye directed to this elegant address of Lucretius. He exhorts his horticultural pupils not to rest satisfied, in their attempts to form a fountain, if, at first, and even for a long time afterwards, they should be disappointed in the flow of water: he advises them to dig deeper and deeper, since probably the earnestly-desired fluid is just at hand. And he then proceeds:

Ainsi d'un long effort moi-même rebuté,
Quand j'ai d'un froid détail maudit l'aridité,
Soudain un trait heureux jaillit d'un fond sterile,
Et mon vers ranimé coule enfin plus facile.

So when, myself, o'erwearied with the past,
Curse some dry subject still before me cast;
I too, at times, some happy turn explore,
And my rous'd verse flows brisker than before.

But the style and imagery of Mason, in his English Garden, exhibits a copy of Lucretius far closer still; and especially in the following passage:

——Ingrateful sure,
When such the theme, becomes the poet's task:
Yet must he try, by modulation meet
Of varied cadence, and selected phrase,
Exact yet free, without inflation bold,
To dignify that theme; must try to form
Such magic sympathy of sense with sound,
As pictures all it sings: while Grace awakes

Quærentem, dictis quibus, et quo carmine, demum
Clara tuæ possim præpandere lumina menti,
Res quibus obcultas penitus convisere possis.
Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necesse est
Non radiei solis neque lucida tela diei
Discutiant, sed Naturæ species, Ratioque :
Quoius principium hinc nobis exordia sumet;
Nullam rem e nihilo gigni divinitus umquam.

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At each blest touch, and, on the lowliest things,
Scatters her rain-bow hues.
B. ii. 250.

Having thus had occasion to introduce into the same note the names of my two friends, Mason and Delille, I cannot avoid adverting to the extraordinary coincidence of taste, time, and subject, which subsists between their respective and exquisite didactic poems. The period in which they wrote was during the American war: to this they both allude, and incline to the same side of politics. The subject of their poetry is Picturesque Gardening: the title chosen by each is precisely similar. Their taste appears to have been formed from the same models, and directed to the same ends; and they both speak in the most rapturous terms of Poussin, Milton, and Kent. Mason's poem, I believe, preceded that of the Abbé only about a twelvemonth; but there is no reason to conceive that the latter, though acquainted with the English language, was by any means apprised of such a publication, when he announced his own *Jardins*.

Ver. 165. —*the day's bright javelins.*—] "Lucida tela diei." This elegant metaphor is frequently employed by Lucretius, in the prosecution of his poem. Ausonius has borrowed it from him. Mosel. 269.

Exultant udæ super arida saxa rapinæ,
*Luciferique* pavent letalia *tela diei.*

O'er the sere rock the juicy rape exults,
And dreads the deadly *arrows of the day.*

Polignac has made a fuller copy still. Anti-Lucr. b. vi. 1414.

Illæ nec *solis radios*, nec *tela diei*
*Lucida* ferre queunt.

Not these the sun's pure beams, nor javelins bright,
Can bear of noon-tide.

Mason, who, as I have just remarked, is a close and classical imitator of our poet, has not failed to employ this bold and beautiful figure, also, in his English Garden.

——Soon thy sturdy axe,
Amid its intertwisted foliage driven,
Shall open all his glades, and ingress give
To the *bright darts of day.* B. ii. 151.

In Dr. Darwin's Loves of the Plants, we meet with the same idea, which is introduced with much beauty and sublimity. He is speaking of the humane Howard.

The spirits of the good, who bend from high,
Wide o'er these earthly scenes, their partial eye,
Saw round his brows a sun-like glory blaze,
In *arrowy* circles of unwearied rays.

The whole description forms a bold and elevated imagery; for which, however, if I be not much mistaken, he is indebted to Ariosto. The passage I

Some happy phrase, some well selected verse,
Meet for the subject; to dispel each shade,
And bid the mystic doctrine hail the day.
For shades there are, and terrors of the soul,
The day can ne'er disperse, though blazing strong
With all the sun's bright javelins. These alone
To Nature yield, and Reason; and, combin'd,
This is the precept they for ever teach,
That NOUGHT FROM NOUGHT BY POW'R DIVINE HAS RIS'N.

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refer to is that in which the Italian bard describes the descent of Michael the archangel from heaven, to the Christian camp, at the command of the Almighty.

Dovunque drizza Michel angel l'ale
Fugon le nubi, e torno il ciel sereno,
*Gli gira intorno un aureo cerchio;* quale
Veggiam di notte lampeggiar baleno.
ORL. FUR. C. xiv.

Where'er his course the radiant envoy steers,
The clouds disperse, the troubled ether clears;
*And round him plays a circling blaze of light,*
*Such as when meteors stream* through dusky night.
HOOLE.

Tertullian, as Mr. Wakefield observes, has introduced this same metaphor of Lucretius into his section on Chastity. "Quibus exquirendis," observes he, "non *lucernæ spiculo, lumine* sed totius *solis lanceâ*, opus est." Cap. 7. "In the investigation of which "it behoves us to employ, not the mere shafts of a "candle, but the arrowy light of the whole sun."

There is also an introduction of the same elegant figure in a beautiful and tender passage of Jortin; the whole of which the reader will find transcribed, on another occasion, in the note on Book iii. v. 1136.

Sidera, purpurei *telis* extincta *diei*
Rursus nocte vigent.

Kill'd by the *arrows of the purple day*,
The stars at night revisit us.

The use of this metaphor, in the description of a severe frost, is scarcely so bold, and is much more common. Dyer, however, has introduced it, with much picturesque effect, in his delineation of a Lapland winter.

——the horrid rage
Of winter irresistible o'erwhelms
The Hyperborean tracts; his *arrowy frosts*,
That pierce through flinty rocks, the Lappian flies.
FLEECE, B. i.

In a similar manner, Milton, in his Paradise Regained:

How quick they wheel'd; and, flying, behind them shot
Sharp sleet of *arrowy* shower.

Whence Gray, in his Descent of Odin:

Iron *sleet of arrowy shower*
Hurtles in the darken'd air.

Ver. 168. *That* NOUGHT FROM NOUGHT BY POW'R DIVINE HAS RIS'N.] This maxim, originated by Democritus, is frequently referred to by Aristotle, and many other philosophers among the ancients, who were not immediately of the Epicurean school. It is thus repeated by Diogenes Laertius, ix. 44. Μηδὲν

Quippe ita formido mortaleis continet omneis,
Quod multa in terris fieri cœloque tuentur,
Quorum operum caussas nullâ ratione videre

---

εκ του μη οντος γινεσθαι, μηδε εις το μη ον φθειρεσθαι. "That nothing has been produced from non-ex- "istence, and to non-existence can never degenerate." It forms the key-stone of the philosophy in the poem before us; and is, therefore, constantly reverted to by Lucretius. By *power divine* we must understand, if we understand any thing at all, either the divinity of the world itself,—in which case he directs his dogma against the Platonists and Pythagoreans, or else the divinity of the popular gods,—and then he is opposing the multitude: since the idea of an eternal intelligent being, at whose mere will and command all Nature sprang into, and is still supported in, her present system of beauty, harmony, and order, constituted, as I have observed in the prefixed life of Lucretius, an avowed article of the Epicurean creed; while various passages of the poem before us, and particularly in the fifth book, prove obviously that Lucretius no more rejected this dogma of Epicurism than he did any other. The real doctrine of Epicurus, upon this subject, appears to be as follows: In common with the philosophers of every school, he believed in the eternity of matter; for they all equally conceived it an absurdity to suppose that the Deity himself could create any thing out of nothing: but that though matter existed from all eternity, there was a time when it was first endowed by the intelligent eternal Cause with powers of motion, and a consequent capability of organization and order. From this moment, motion commenced; atoms began to unite with atoms; concrete substances to be produced; affinities to multiply; and the universe to assume form: but an incalculable number of apparently different motions were essayed, and of years exhausted, before that form was finally completed. This theory of cosmogony is detailed most beautifully, and at full length, by Lucretius, in his fifth book; and this, and this alone, explains the declarations of Epicurus, that the world entirely proceeded from the will and command of him who possesses all immortality, and all beatitude. It completely removes the impiety with which this doctrine of apparent chance has been perpetually loaded. It formed, for the most part, the actual opinion of Dinant, Abelard, and other christian Epicureans, but more especially of Gassendi; and very closely corresponds with the system of Des Cartes, which is founded entirely upon such a supposition. "There "is nothing," says he, "contradictory to the ra- "tional faculties of man, in conceiving that the Deity "did no more than create the original chaos of all "things; enduing it with certain laws, and leaving "it to the gradual operation of those laws—to pro- "duce order from confusion, to separate element "from element, and form the vast varieties of animals "and vegetables that exist over the whole earth, and "are nourished from its bosom." See Baker's Reflections on Learning, chap. vii.; Des Cartes Method. Philos.; Gassendi de Exortu Mundi. And this indeed, with the exception of the eternity of matter alone, is the avowed doctrine of La Metherie, De Luc, Hutton, Whitehurst, Kirwan, and almost all our modern cosmologists. Nor could it be otherwise, than upon such an interpretation, that several learned poets of Italy have attempted to reconcile the principles of Epicurus, or Democritus, with those of the Christian religion; and, among others, Gio. Michele Milani, who, in 1698, printed, as we are told by Crescembini, a very long and learned canzone on light, extending to not less than eighty-three stanzas; much of which was devoted to this very subject. "In essa," says he, "si spiega buona parte "della filosophia di Democrito adattata alla verità "Cristiana." Comentarj Poetici, l. ii. c. 10.

If indeed we were to examine the opinions of many of the most celebrated fathers of the Christian church,

But the blind fear, the superstition vain
Of mortals uninform'd, when spring, perchance,
In heav'n above, or earth's sublunar scene,
Events to them impervious, instant deem

---

as well as of the ancient Jews, we should make an approach much nearer still to the cosmology of Epicurus: for several of them not only believed in the gradual evolution of the world, but in the eternity of matter itself; conceiving that matter was necessarily co-eternal with God, as the solar rays are coëval with the sun. Philo appears to have been altogether a Platonist upon this subject. See his Cosmog. vol. i. p. 5. nov. ed.; and Justin Martyr, Apol. 59. affirms, that the doctrine of Plato, with respect to the creation of the world, is the very doctrine of Moses; and from Moses was borrowed, Ινα δε και παρα των ἡμετερων διδασκαλων λαβοντα τον Πλατωνα μαθητε το ειπειν, ὑλην ἀμορφον στρεψαντα, κοσμον ποιεσαι, ακουσατε των αυτολεξει ειρημενων δια Μωσεως, κ. τ. λ. The ὑλην ἀμορφον, or *unfashioned matter* here referred to, out of which the world was created by the Deity, and which was supposed to have been co-eternal with himself, is indeed expressly made mention of by the writer of the book of Wisdom, chap. xi. 17; and he has also been supposed, in consequence, to have been attached to the whole of this opinion. In reality, it is not easy to extricate him from the charge; and Origen, who enters expressly into an examination of the passage, feels himself compelled to remark, that this book is not received *by all* as canonical Scripture. Few, however, besides Maimonides, have chosen to contend, that the Hebrew ברא *created*, in Gen. i. 1. necessarily implies an *absolute creation out of nothing*.

It has been of late very generally believed on the continent, and probably with a view of reconciling the apparent incongruity of the origin of matter out of nothing, upon Christian principles, that the world is an emanation of the substance of the Supreme Being. Mr. Kant is supposed to favour this belief. It has been professedly brought forwards and supported by M. Isnard, in his work "Sur l'Immortalité de l'Ame," printed at Paris in 1802; and is approved of by M. Anquetil du Perron, the learned translator of the Oupnek'-hat, or abridgement of the Veids. The difficulty, however, does not appear to be in any great degree diminished by such a conjecture; for, if matter be an emanation from the substance of the Deity, then is the Deity himself material, and matter becomes not only eternal, but the Eternal God, the very essence of the Divine Being: a doctrine far exceeding the impiety of the atomic hypothesis, and infinitely more absurd. It is, moreover, a mere revivification of the wildest dogmas of Plato and Pythagoras, obviously derived from India, and still existing in the Braminic Veids. It is thus stated in M. Perron's version of the Oupnek'-hat, to which I have just referred: "The whole universe is "the Creator, proceeds from the Creator, subsists "in him, and returns to him. The ignorant assert "that the universe, in the beginning, did not exist "in its author, and that it was created out of no-"thing.—O ye, whose hearts are pure, *how could* "*something arise out of nothing?* This first Being, "alone, and without likeness, was the ALL in the "beginning: he could multiply himself under dif-"ferent forms: he created fire from his essence, "which is light, &c."

The whole of this doctrine of the Epicurean school is thus fully detailed, by the cardinal Polignac:

Ex nihilo nil fit: lex inviolabilis esto:
Nil ruit in nihilum, clamat tota schola Epicuri.
Ergo si quæ sunt, æterna fuere; nec unquam
Cessatura manent. Intermoriuntur ubique
Corpora, materies autem quæ corpora fundat
Semper erit, fuit, est: finemque ignorat et ortum.
ANTI-LUCR. ix. 471.

Nought springs from nought: be this th' eternal law:
To nought nought tends, shouts all th' atomic school.

Possunt; ac fieri divino numine rentur.
Quas ob res, ubi viderimus nihil posse creari
De nihilo, tum, quod sequimur, jam rectius inde
Perspiciemus; et unde queat res quæque creari,
Et quo quæque modo fiant operâ sine divôm.

Nam, si de nihilo fierent, ex omnibus rebus
Omne genus nasci posset: nihil semine egeret.
E mare primum homines, e terrâ posset oriri
Squamigerum genus, et volucres: erumpere cœlo
Armenta; atque aliæ pecudes, genus omne ferarum,
Incerto partu, culta ac deserta tenerent:
Nec fructus iidem arboribus constare solerent,
Sed mutarentur; ferre omnes omnia possent.
Quippe, ubi non essent genitalia corpora quoique,
Quî posset mater rebus consistere certa?
At nunc, seminibus quia certis quæque creantur,

---

Hence what exists, was ever; nor can once
Yield to destruction: forms concrete may die,
But the firm atoms, whence such forms uprose,
Are, were, and will be—void of birth or end.

Ver. 179. *Could things from nought proceed, then whence the use*] The poet, having advanced his grand proposition, endeavours to establish it by six different arguments; throughout the whole of which, but especially in the second and fourth, there is an equal combination of logical precision and picturesque imagery. If created existences could arise from nothing, if there were no definite and unchangeable law of origin,—then every thing might spring from every thing; every effect from every cause; the season of appearance would be indeterminate; the hour of perfection incalculable; the mode of increase irregular; the powers possest uncertain; and all moral agency nugatory, and in vain. These ar-

Some power supernal present, and employ'd.—
Admit this truth, that NOUGHT FROM NOTHING SPRINGS,
And all is clear. Develop'd, then, we trace,
Through Nature's boundless realm, the rise of things,
Their modes, and pow'rs innate; nor need from heav'n
Some god's descent to rule each rising fact.

Could things from nought proceed, then whence the use
Of generative atoms, binding strong
Kinds to their kinds perpetual? Man himself
Might spring from ocean; from promiscuous earth
The finny race, or feath'ry tribes of heaven:
Prone down the skies the bellowing herds might bound,
Or frisk from cloud to cloud: while flocks, and beasts
Fierce and most savage, undefin'd in birth,
The field or forest might alike display.
Each tree, inconstant to our hopes, would bend
With foreign fruit: and all things all things yield.
Whence but from elemental seeds that act
With truth, and power precise, can causes spring

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guments, as will readily be perceived, extend from verse 178 to verse 246.

Ver. 184. *Prone down the skies the bellowing herds might bound,*]

Why do not beasts that move, or stones that lie
Loose on the field, through distant regions fly?

So, imitating this passage of Lucretius, inquires Sir Richard Blackmore, in his *Creation*, book I.; a production, which, although admitted by Johnson into his own arrangement of English Poems, probably on account of its religious and moral tendency, is but very sparing indeed in true poetic spirit and embellishment. There are many passages in it, however, which are obviously deduced from Lucretius; whose philosophy it was the grand object of the worthy knight to subvert, as far as he was able.

Inde enascitur, atque oras in luminis exit,
Materies ubi inest quoiusque, et corpora prima:
Atque hac re nequeunt ex omnibus omnia gigni,
Quod certis in rebus inest secreta facultas.

Præterea, quur vere rosam, frumenta calore,
Viteis auctumno fundi suadente videmus;
Si non, certa suo quia tempore semina rerum
Quom confluxerunt, patefit quodcumque creatur,
Dum tempestates adsunt, et vivida tellus
Tuto res teneras ecfert in luminis oras?
Quod, si de nihilo fierent, subito exorerentur
Incerto spatio, atque alienis partibus anni:
Quippe ubi nulla forent primordia, quæ genitali
Concilio possent arceri tempore iniquo.

Nec porro augendis rebus spatio foret usus
Seminis ad coitum, e nihilo si crescere possent.
Nam fierent juvenes subito ex infantibus parvis,
E terrâque, exorta repente, arbusta salirent:
Quorum nihil fieri manifestum est, omnia quando
Paullatim crescunt, ut par est, semine certo;
Crescentesque genus servant: ut noscere possis
Quidque suâ de materiâ grandescere, alique.

Powerful and true themselves? But grant such seeds,
And all, as now, through Nature's wide domain,
In time predicted, and predicted place,
Must meet the day concordant; must assume
The form innately stampt, and prove alone
Why all from all things never can proceed.
Whence does the balmy rose possess the spring?
The yellow grain the summer? or, the vine
With purple clusters, cheer th' autumnal hours?
Whence, true to time, if such primordial seeds
Act not harmonious, can aught here survey'd,
Aught in its season, rear its tender form,
And the glad earth protrude it to the day?
But, if from nought things rise, then each alike,
In every spot, at every varying month,
Must spring discordant; void of primal seeds
To check all union till th' allotted hour.
Nor space for growth would then be needful: all
Springing from nought, and still from nought supply'd.
The puny babe would start abrupt to man;
And trees umbrageous, crown'd with fruit mature,
Burst, instant, from the greensward. But such facts
Each day opposes; and, opposing, proves
That all things gradual swell from seeds defin'd,
Of race and rank observant, and intent
T' evince th' appropriate matter whence they thrive.

Huc adcedit, uti sine certis imbribus anni
Lætificos nequeat fetus submittere tellus;
Nec porro, secreta cibo, natura animantum
Propagare genus possit, vitamque tueri:
Ut potius multis conmunia corpora rebus
Multa putes esse, ut verbis elementa videmus,
Quam sine principiis ullam rem existere posse.

Denique, quur homines tantos natura parare
Non potuit, pedibus quei pontum per vada possent
Transire, et magnos manibus divellere monteis,

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Ver. 220. *The timely show'r from heav'n must add benign*
*Its influence too,—*] The author of the book of Job, the sublimest drama that was ever composed by any writer, whether sacred or profane, denominates, with inimitable elegance, chap. xxxviii. 31. these refreshing and seasonable showers "the sweet influences of Chimah;" or, as it is rendered in the Septuagint, and thence borrowed into our English version, "of the Pleiades." The constellation Chimah (כימה) answers to the more modern sign Taurus, as Chesil (כסל) does to Capricorn; and the alternate seasons of spring and winter, the revival and destruction of the world, are hence beautifully alluded to: Mazaroth (מזרות) is, in all probability, the zodiac at large; and Aish (יש) Arcturus, one of the most remarkable stars in the northern hemisphere,—and hence, by an elegant synecdoche, employed for the northern hemisphere itself. See this subject more minutely examined in the note on book ii. verse 1105 of the present poem. The Greek translators, however, not being positive as to the term Mazaroth have, in this instance, and in this alone, retained the Hebrew lection; in which conduct they have also been followed by the translators of the English version. I cannot avoid noticing, in this place, the absurd argument of that biblical blunderer Thomas Paine, deduced from these two verses, to prove the invalidity and spuriousness of the whole book of Job. Finding these *Greek* terms in the English version, and apprehending, from his gross ignorance of the original, that the same Greek terms occurred in the Hebrew, he has ventured to assert that this book could never have been written originally in *Hebrew*; that it must have been first of all compiled, in a much later period than is generally contended for, by some romance-writer of Greece, and afterwards translated from the Greek into the Hebrew tongue, from

But matter thus appropriate, or e'en space
For growth mature, form not the whole requir'd.
The timely shower from heav'n must add benign
Its influence too, ere yet the teeming earth
Emit her joyous produce; or, the ranks
Of man and reptile, thence alone sustain'd,
May spring to life, and propagate their kinds.
Say rather, then, in much that meets the view,
That various powers combine, concordant all,
Common and elemental, as in words
Such elemental letters,—than contend,
That void of genial atoms, aught exists.
Why form'd not Nature man with ample pow'rs
To fathom, with his feet, th' unbottom'd main?
To root up mountains with his mighty hands?

---

which, as an original publication in this latter language, we have received it into English. This, however, is but one blunder among a thousand that might easily be selected from this unrivalled specimen of sober and classical criticism.

In allusion to this elegant description in the book of Job, Milton, who indefatigably examined the Scriptures, as well for their poetic ornaments as important doctrines, thus paints the first production and appearance of this constellation before its Creator:

—The Pleiades before him danc'd,
Shedding sweet influence.

Par. Lost, vii. 370.

Ver. 231. *To fathom, with his feet, th' unbottom'd main?*
*To root up mountains with his mighty hands?*]
As a philosopher, Lucretius was superior to all vulgar prejudices and stories; and his uniform aim is to release the mind from their undue influence. He treats, therefore, in these lines, as unauthentic fables the wonderful relations of Polyphemus, and the giants. Of the former of whom, we learn from Virgil, what was the popular belief as to his stature:

——graditurque per æquor
Jam medium necdum fluctus latera ardua tinxit.

Æn. iii. 364.

——through deepest seas he strides,
While scarce the topmost billows touch his sides.

Dryden.

Of the latter, this is his description in a different poem:

Ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam
Scilicet et Ossæ frondosum involvere Olympum.

Georg. i. 288.

Multaque vivendo vitalia vincere secla;
Si non, materies quia rebus reddita certa est
Gignundis, e quâ constat quid possit oriri?
Nihil igitur fieri de nihilo posse fatendum est;
Semine quando opus est rebus, quo quæque creatæ
Aëris in teneras possent proferrier auras.

Postremo, quoniam incultis præstare videmus
Culta loca, et manibus meliores reddere fetus,
Esse videlicet in terris primordia rerum;
Quæ nos, fecundas vortentes vomere glebas,
Terraïque solum subigentes, cimus ad ortus.
Quod, si nulla forent, nostro sine quæque labore,
Sponte suâ, multo fieri meliora videres.
Huc adcedit, uti quidque in sua corpora rursum
Dissolvat natura, neque ad nihilum interimat res.

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On Pelion Ossa thrice they strove to raise,
On Ossa vast Olympus, crown'd with bays.

The magnitude of the pagan giants or Titans, however, is nothing to that fabled, either by the Mohammedans, or the Talmudists, of our first parents; who, by the former, are said to have been as tall as a high palm tree;—and, by the latter, to have measured nine hundred cubits; and to have waded from Paradise, after their expulsion, through the ocean to the eastern extremity of Europe. See Bartoloz. Bibl. Rabin i. 65, and Yahya, Comment. in Koran.

Klopstock appears obviously to have imitated these verses of Lucretius, in his description of the approach of Magog to the infernal assembly, convened by Satan on his return from earth.

—Die meere zerflossen in lange gebirge,
Da sein kommender fuss die schwarzen fluten zertheilte.—
Jetzo, da er das trockne betrat, da warf er verwüstend,
Noch mit seinen gebirgen ein ganzes gestad' in den abgrund. Messias, b. ii.

—To mountains heav'd the main,
As its black waves his forward footsteps press'd:—
Till, gain'd the strand, th' uprooted shore he hurl'd,
With all its rocks, deep down the dread abyss.

Ver. 247. *And as from nought the genial seeds of things*] Having elucidated his first position, "that nothing

Or live o'er lapsing ages victor still?
Why, but because primordial matter, fixt
And limited in act, to all is dealt
Of things created, whence their forms expand.
And hence again we learn, and prove express,
Nought springs from nought, and that, from seeds precise,
Whate'er is form'd must meet th' etherial day.
Mark how the cultur'd soil the soil excells
Uncultur'd, richer in autumnal fruits.
Here, too, the latent principles of things,
Freed by the plough, the fertile glebe that turns
And subjugates the sod, exert their power,
And swell the harvest: else, spontaneous, all
Would still ascend by labour unimprov'd.
And as from nought the genial seeds of things
Can never rise, so Nature that dissolves
Their varying forms, to nought can ne'er reduce.

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ean spring from nothing," our philosophic poet now ventures to advance a second, and maintains that "nothing can ever be annihilated, or reduced to nothing." This axiom he supports by four arguments, which extend to verse 306. According to the constitution of Nature, not a single substance can be dissolved, or even change its texture, without the interposition of some foreign and superior force. But if all things were perishable throughout, and subject to utter annihilation, no such foreign force would be necessary; and we should, in a variety of instances, be eye-witnesses of the sudden evanescence of substances we had falsely deemed solid. Thus, too, if, upon the gradual or ultimate decay of things, every atom were completely destroyed, there could be no regular return of anterior productions;—productions which have been exhibited at definite intervals, and without any variation, through an incalculable series of years, and which must, therefore, for aught that appears to the contrary, on the first view of such productions, continue to be exhibited for ever. Were not this a fact,—were all things perishable, and equally perishable, a similar degree of sudden and external force would divide their contexture, and all would equally vanish in a moment: nor could we trace, in that case, the uniform interchange of substance into substance; follow up its disjunction or dissolution; and predict in what form, and at what definite period, it would next appear before us.

Nam, si quid mortale e cunctis partibus esset,
Ex oculis res quæque repente erepta periret;
Nullâ vi foret usus enim, quæ partibus ejus
Discidium parere, et nexus exsolvere, posset.
Quod nunc, æterno quia constant semine quæque,
Donec vis obiit, quæ res diverberet ictu,
Aut intus penetret per inania, dissoluatque,
Nullius exitium patitur Natura videri.

Præterea, quæquomque vetustate amovet ætas,
Si penitus perimit consumens materiem omnem,
Unde animale genus generatim in lumina vitæ
Reducit Venus; et reductum dædala tellus
Unde alit, atque auget, generatim pabula præbens?
Unde mare, ingenuei fontes, æternaque longe
Flumina, subpeditant? unde æther sidera pascit?

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Ver. 265. —*or, ether feed the stars?*] The Stoics, Epicureans, and almost all the schools of ancient philosophy, conceived that the stars, and even the sun itself, were fires that required continual pabulum, or fuel, in consequence of continual exhaustion. This pabulum, as they imagined, consisted of exhalations of the finest texture, perpetually, but insensibly, ascending from the earth and seas, and, when converted into ether, directing their course through the skies for this purpose. Hence Callimachus, Hym. Del. 175.

——η ισαριθμοι
Τειρεσιν, ὑψικα πλειστα κατ' ηερα βουκολεονται.

——numerous as stars
That feed on air, and wander round the pole.

A more full and philosophic account of this ancient opinion may be collected from our author's system of the origin of the world, as inimitably delineated in the fifth book of this poem. In total consonance herewith, Pliny tells us in plain prose, Nat. Hist. l. ii. c. 9. "Sidera vero haud dubio humore "terreno pasci."—"That the stars are doubtless "fed by exhalations from the earth." And hence Virgil, in a passage I will quote, with an emendation strenuously contended for by Mr. Wakefield:

In fleta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbræ,
Lustra dabunt convexa, *polus dum sidera pascet*,
Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt. Æn. i. 611.

Were things destructible throughout, then all
Abrupt would perish, passing from the sight;
Nor foreign force be wanting to disjoin
Their vital parts, or break th' essential bond.
But since, from seeds eternal all things rise,
Till force like this prevail, with sudden stroke
Crushing the living substance, or within
Deep entering each interstice, to dissolve
All active, Nature no destruction views.
Were time the total to destroy of all
By age decay'd,—say whence could Venus' self
The ranks renew of animated life?
Or, if renew'd, whence earth's dedalian power
Draw the meet foods to nurture, and mature?
Whence springs and rivers, with perpetual course,
The deep supply? or, ether feed the stars?

---

Sir Isaac Newton supposes an ether surrounding the atmosphere of planets, and subtile enough to penetrate the pores of all bodies whatever; most of the phenomena of which he imagines to depend upon its powers. In consequence of which, he denominates it a subtile or etherial medium. Des Cartes, in like manner, admits a species of ether, which he calls "materia subtilis;" and which, consistently with his doctrine of an universal plenum, he conceives not only adequate to pervade, but actually filling all the vacuities of bodies. But the ether of the ancient poets and philosophers much more nearly resembles the congregation of hydrogen or inflammable air of modern chemists; and which, almost to a certainty, according to some late chemical experiments, floats on the aërial atmosphere of the globe, and seems to realize the imaginary fifth element of the Chinese and Hindus. Hydrogen is determined by Mr. Cavendish, to be ten times lighter than common air: according to the laws of gravitation, it must, therefore, be continually ascending through it, and resting above it; for there is no more reason for supposing it should be restrained, or combined with it in its passage, than for supposing that air must be restrained or combined in its passage through water. Thus disengaged, and freed from all pressure, this volatile gas necessarily then expands to inconceivable tenuity; and accumulating, as from its own levity, and the motion of the earth, it must do, principally over the poles, it is probably the cause of fire-balls, northern lights, and many other phenomena which are exhibited in the superior regions.

Omnia enim debet, mortali corpore quæ sunt,
Infinita ætas consumpse ante acta, diesque.
Quod, si in eo spatio atque ante actâ ætate fuere,
E quibus hæc rerum consistit summa refecta;
Inmortali sunt naturâ prædita certe:
Haud igitur possunt ad nihilum quæque revorti.
Denique, res omneis eadem vis caussaque volgo
Conficeret, nisi materies æterna teneret
Inter se nexu, minus aut magis indupedita;
Tactus enim leti satis esset caussa profecto;
Quippe, ubi nulla forent æterno corpore; quorum
Contextum vis deberet dissolvere quæque.
At nunc, inter se quia nexus principiorum
Dissimiles constant, æternaque materies est,
Incolomi remanent res corpore, dum satis acris
Vis obeat pro texturâ quoiusque reperta.
Haud igitur redit ad nihilum res ulla, sed omnes
Discidio redeunt in corpore materiai.

Ver. 266. —*ever-during time,*] "Infinita ætas." Ever-during, infinite, eternal time, are phrases often adopted by our poet, to express a period that surpasses comprehension. Thus, without going beyond the present book, we meet, in verse 559 of the original, with *dies infinita*, and shortly afterwards, in verse 634, with *ex eterno tempore*; and so, in verse 1126 of the translation:

——scenes throughout
'Twere vain t' expect from all-eternal time.

Thus too Marchetti: "Dopo un eterno tempo."

It is a phraseology that has been imitated, or at least adopted, by many of our own poets. Glover is particularly attached to it. Thus in book v. of his Leonidas:

Whate'er could perish, ever-during time,
And rolling ages, must have long destroy'd.
But if, through rolling ages, and the lapse
Of ever-during time, still firm at base,
Material things have stood, then must that base
Exist immortal, and the fates defy.
Thus, too, the same efficient force apply'd
Alike must all things rupture, if, within,
No substance dwelled eternal to maintain
In close, and closer, links their varying bonds.
E'en the least touch,—for every cause alike
Must break their textures, equal in effect,
If no imperishable power oppos'd,—
E'en touch were then irrevocable death.
But since, with varying strength, the seeds within
Adhere, of form precise, and prove express
Their origin eternal,—free from ill,
And undivided must those forms endure,
Till some superior force the compact cleave.
Thus things to nought dissolve not; but, subdu'd,
Alone return to elemental seeds.

---

Time with his own eternal lip shall sing.
Ver. 38.

And again, in book vii. of the same poem:

——virtue shall enrol your names
In Time's eternal records.
Ver. 361.

In like manner, in the sacred writings we meet with the phrase, "eternal or everlasting hills." Thus, Habak. iii. 6. ויתפצעו הררי עד

He beheld and scatter'd the nations;
*The everlasting mountains were dispers'd;*
The perpetual hills bowed down.

Postremo, pereunt imbres, ubi eos pater Æther
In gremium matris Terraï præcipitavit:
At nitidæ surgunt fruges, rameique virescunt
Arboribus; crescunt ipsæ, fetuque gravantur.
Hinc aliter porro nostrum genus, atque ferarum:
Hinc lætas urbeis puerûm florere videmus,
Frundiferasque novis avibus canere undique sylvas:
Hinc, fessæ pecudes, pingues per pabula læta,
Corpora deponunt; et candens lacteus humor
Uberibus manat distentis: hinc nova proles

---

Ver. 287. *When, on the bosom of maternal* Earth,
*His showers redundant genial* Ether *pours,*]

The beauty of this passage needs not be pointed out to any one. In the personification of the poets, ether has always been allotted a masculine, as the earth has a feminine gender; and the productions of nature have been regarded as the fruits of their connubial embraces. Virgil has imitated our poet, Georg. ii. 325; and "he strives hard," observes Dr. Warton, "to excel him; but I am afraid it can-" not be said that he has done it."

Tum pater omnipotens fœcundis imbribus Æther
Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit, et omnes
Magnus alit, magno commixtus corpore, fetus.

Ether, great lord of life, his wings extends,
And on the bosom of his bride descends,
With showers prolific feeds the vast embrace,
That fills all nature, and renews her race.

Sotheby.

The idea is common among the Greek poets; and it is more than probable that if Virgil borrowed the above from Lucretius, Lucretius himself had a reference to the following verses, in a fragment of Euripedes:

Ερα μεν ομβρου Γαι ὁτ' αν ξηρον πεδον,
Ακαρπον αυχμω, νοτιδος ενδεως εχη·
Ερα δ' ὡ σεμνος Ουρανος, πληρουμενος
Ομβρου, πεσειν εις Γαιαν, Αφροδιτης ὑποι
Ὁτ' αν δε συμμιχθητον εις ταυτον δυο,
Τικτουσιν ἡμιν παντα κακτρεφουσ' ἁμα,
Οθεν βροτειον ζη τε, και θαλλει, γενος.

Earth loves the shower, when, parch'd with summer-heat,
Her barren womb no genial moisture knows;
And genial Ether loves, with showers distent,
On her soft lap to fall in dalliance sweet.
From the fond union that creates, at once,
And nurtures all things, man himself proceeds,
Augments and ripens.

Tasso has unquestionably an allusion to this passage of our poet, in his Jerusalem Delivered; and his description is highly beautiful.

La terra, che dianzi afflitta ed egra
Di fessure le membra avea ripiene,

When, on the bosom of maternal Earth,
His showers redundant genial Ether pours,
The dulcet drops seem lost: but harvests rise,
Jocund and lovely; and, with foliage fresh,
Smiles every tree, and bends beneath its fruit.
Hence man and beast are nourish'd: hence o'erflow
Our joyous streets with crowds of frolic youth;
And with fresh songs th' umbrageous groves resound.
Hence the herds fatten, and repose at ease,
O'er the gay meadows, their unwieldy forms;
While from each full-distended udder drops
The candid milk spontaneous; and hence, too,
With tottering footsteps, o'er the tender grass,

---

La pioggia in se raccoglie, e si rintegra,
E la comparte alle piu interne vene:
E largamente i nutritivi umori
Alle piante ministra, all' erbe, ai fiori, &c.
Cant. xiii.

——Earth that late her gaping rifts disclos'd,
And fainting lay to parching heat expos'd,
Receives and ministers the vital show'rs
To fading herbs, to plants, to trees, and flow'rs:
Her fever thus allay'd, new health returns,
No more the flame within her bosom burns;
Again new beauties grace her gladden'd soil,
Again renew'd, her hills and valleys smile.
Hoole.

Long as this note is, and numerous as are its references, I cannot conclude it without instancing a parallel passage of Hebrew poetry, which, in point of sublimity and elegance, surpasses even Lucretius himself. The reader will find it in Psalm lxv. 9. 13.

Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it;
Thou abundantly enrichest it
With the 'dewy' stream of God, replete with water.
Thou preparest, and fittest it for corn:
Thou drenchest its furrows; its clods thou dissolvest;
Thou mellowest it with showers; thou blessest its increase;
And with thy bounty thou crownest the year.
Thy footsteps drop fatness; they drop on the pastures of the desert,
And the hillocks are begirt with exultation.
The pastures are clothed with flocks, the vales are covered with corn;
They all shout and sing aloud for joy.

Ver. 299. *With tottering footsteps,*—] The description here given us of the lamb just dropped into the world is not more beautiful than accurate. Dyer who, to the advantage of much original genius, added a strict attention to the various phænomena of nature, has a picture of the same subject in his Fleece.

Artubus infirmis teneras lasciva per herbas
Ludit, lacte mero menteis perculsa novellas.
Haud igitur penitus pereunt quæquomque videntur;
Quando alid ex alio reficit Natura, nec ullam
Rem gigni patitur, nisi morte ajuta alienâ.
Nunc age sis, quoniam docui nihil posse creari
De nihilo, neque item genita ad nihilum revocari;
Ne quâ forte tamen cœptes diffidere dictis,
Quod nequeunt oculis rerum primordia cerni;
Adcipe præterea, quæ corpora tute necesse est

---

which will by most readers be regarded as a copy. It is thus he addresses the shepherd:

But spread around thy tenderest diligence
*In flowery spring-time when the new-dropt lamb,*
*Tottering with weakness*, by his mother's side
Feels the fresh world about him.

B. i.

It is not a little extraordinary that this most characteristic trait in our poet's inimitable picture, *the tottering footstep*, (artubus infirmis) of the new-born lamb, should have been entirely omitted, not only by Creech, but even in the prose version of Guernier. The French translation of Couture is likewise as little to the purpose: but Marchetti, who is always beautiful, and nearly always just, and by far the most elegant translator that has ever attempted to give Lucretius into any modern language, has not suffered this part of the description to pass unnoticed:

Quindi per i lieti paschi i grassi armenti
Posan le membra affaticate stanche,
E dalle piene mamme in bianche stille
Gronda sovente il nutrivo umore
Onde i novi lor parti ebri e lascivi
*Con non ben fermo piè* scherzan per l'erbe.

Evelyn, likewise, though in feeble poetry, has preserved something of the idea in the following lines:

Hence pure milk from distended teats distils,
And late-fall'n young warm'd with sweet suckit fills;
Who, frisking o'er the meadows, as they pass,
*Frolic their feeble limbs on tender grass.*

The delineation both of the bleating lamb, and the unweildy ox, is imitated in Les Jardins of Delille: but he has entirely omitted this delicate and picturesque touch; nor does his introduction of the *warrior* horse into the group, which is not found in Lucretius, altogether atone for its absence:

Là, du sommet lontain des roches buissonneuses,
Je vois le chevre pendre. Ici de mille agneaux
L'echo porte les cris de côteaux en côteaux.
Dans ces prés abreuvés des eaux de la colline,
Couché sur ses genoux, le bœuf pesant rumine;
Tandis qu' impetueux, fier, inquiet, ardent,
Cet animal guerrier qu' enfanta le trident,
Deploie, en se jouant, dans un gras pâturage
Sa vigueur indomtée et sa grace sauvage.

Chant i.

There hangs the wild goat o'er the bushy steep,
Here o'er the hills a thousand echoes leap

Gambol their wanton young, each little heart
Quivering beneath the genuine nectar quaff'd.
So nought can perish, that the sight surveys,
With utter death; but Nature still renews
Each from the other, nor can form afresh
One substance, till another be destroy'd.
But come, my friend, and, since the muse has sung
Things cannot spring from, or return to nought,
Lest thou should'st urge, still sceptic, that no eye
Their generative atoms e'er has trac'd;
Mark in what scenes thyself must own, perforce,

---

From flocks shrill bleating. In yon mead the steer
Bends his huge bulk by rivulets cool and clear;
While bold, impetuous, fierce, and fill'd with pride
The warrior beast, that issu'd from the tide,
Displays, as o'er the fattening glebe he skims
His dauntless force, and savage grace of limbs.

Ver. 302. ——*Nature all renews*
*Each from the other*, &c.—] The discoveries of modern chemistry have established the truth of this doctrine beyond the possibility of controversy. Every thing is produced from, and nourished by, every thing; by the recombination of the particles of one body, when decompounded, a second body is generated, from this second a third, from this third a fourth, and in the same manner to infinity. "The corruption of one substance," observed Aristotle, many ages ago, "is the generation of another: and "the generation of one substance is the corruption "of another." It would form an admirable motto to the Lavoisierian system. Ἡ τουδε φθορα, αλλου γινεσις ἡ τουδε γινεσις αλλου φθορα.

There is hence much appropriate beauty in that part of the heathen mythology which represents Saturn, or Chronus, the origin of all things, the father of gods and men, as devouring the children he had generated; and hence, too, the strict propriety, as well as elegance, of the following line addressed to him in one of the hymns of Orpheus:

Ὁς δαπανας μεν απαντα και αυξεις εμπαλιν αυτος.

Thou *all-consuming*, *all-renewing* power!

Ver. 306. *But come, my friend*, &c.—] The poet is not content with having logically established the truth of his position; he is anxious to remove every doubt which can possibly be urged in opposition to it. And the only argument which he conceives capable of producing doubt at all is, that no such eternal and unchangeable principles or seeds are discoverable in bodies by ocular perception. The force of such argument or observation, however, he completely frustrates by proving, in a variety of elegant and apposite instances, that we unanimously admit the existence of bodies even where, as in the case in question, the eye is possest of no power of decision; and a different tribunal is appealed to. The illustration of this assertion is continued to verse 373.

Confiteare esse in rebus, nec posse videri.
Principio, venti vis verberat incita pontum,
Ingenteisque ruit naveis, et nubila differt;
Interdum, rapido percurrens turbine, campos
Arboribus magnis sternit, monteisque supremos
Sylvifragis vexat flabris: ita perfurit acri
Cum fremitu, sævitque minaci murmure, pontus.
Sunt igitur venti nimirum corpora cæca,
Quæ mare, quæ terras, quæ denique nubila cœli,
Verrunt, ac subito vexantia turbine raptant.

Ver. 312. ——*th' excited wind torments the deep*;] Virgil has several beautiful descriptions of a storm of wind in his different poems; and in most of them he has been indebted to Lucretius, though I do not know that he has excelled him in any. The following is bold and picturesque:

Qualis hyperboreis Aquilo cum densus ab oris
Incubuit, Scythiæque hyemes atque arida differt
Nubila, tum segetes altæ campique nutantes
Lenibus horrescunt flabris, summæque sonorem
Dant sylvæ, longique urgent ad littora fluctus:
Ille volat, simul arva fugâ, simul æquora verrens.
Georg. iii. 196.

So Boreas in his race, when rushing forth,
Sweeps the dark skies, and clears the cloudy North:
The waving harvests bend beneath his blast,
The forest shakes, the groves their honours cast.
He flies aloft, and, with impetuous roar,
Pursues the foaming surges to the shore.
Dryden.

Lucretius, in his turn, has been indebted to Homer. The storm of wind he has here so admirably described, and the storm of water to which he immediately afterwards compares it, both probably owe their origin to the following simile, introduced to illustrate the rage and activity of Tydides:

Θυιε γαρ αμπεδιον, ποταμω πλησθεισι τοικως,
Χειμαρρω, ὁς τ' ωκα ῥεων εκεδασσε γεφυρας, &c.
Il. E. 87.

Thus from high hills the torrents swift and strong
Deluge whole fields, and sweep the trees along;
Thro' ruined moles the rushing wave resounds,
*O'erwhelms the bridge*, and bursts the lofty bounds:
The yellow harvests of the ripen'd year,
And flatted vineyards one sad waste appear;
While Jove descends in sluicy sheets of rain,
And all the labours of mankind are vain.
Pope.

It is from Homer or Lucretius Ariosto has copied his description of the same phenomenon. The destruction of the incumbent bridge, with several other circumstances, occur alike in each of them. Orl. Fur. C. ix.

——alhora gonfio, e bianco gia di spume
Per nieve sciolta, e per montane piove,
E l'impeto de l'aqua havea disciolto,
*E tratto seco il ponte*, e il passo tolto.

Still atoms dwell, tho' viewless still to sense.
And, first, th' excited wind torments the deep;
Wrecks the tough bark, and tears the shivering clouds:
Now, with wide whirlwind, prostrating alike
O'er the waste champian, trees, and bending blade;
And now, perchance, with forest-rending force,
Rocking the mighty mountains on their base.
So vast its fury!—But that fury flows
Alone from viewless atoms, that, combin'd,
Thus form the fierce tornado, raging wild
O'er heav'n, and earth, and ocean's dread domain.

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——the waters swelled with heavy rains,
And melted snows, had deluged all the plains;
And, loudly foaming, with resistless force,
Had *borne the bridge* before them in their course.
HOOLE.

Thomson, in his description of an autumnal flood, has forgotten to introduce this piece of imagery, but in other respects he is minutely picturesque, and possest of considerable merit.

Red from the hills innumerable streams
Tumultuous roar; and high above its banks
The river lift: before whose rushing tide
Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages and swains,
Roll mingled down—all that the winds had spar'd
In one wild moment ruin'd.
AUTUMN, l. 337.

But the bold and energetic muse of the Spanish poet Ercilla, has far surpassed both the Italian and the English. To this admirable bard, as well as gallant soldier, I have already adverted, and shall have frequent occasion to refer. A variety of his delineations prove him to have been well acquainted with Lucretius, and well worthy of imitating him. The passage I now allude to occurs in the ninth canto of his Araucana near the commencement, and comprises the opening of the tempest that announced the visible appproach of the Indian dæmon Eponamon:

Subito comenco el ayre à turbarse,
Y de prodigios tristes se espessava:
Nuves con nuves vienen à cerrarse,
Turbulento rumor se levantava,
Que con ayrados impitus violentos
Monstravan su furor los quatro vientos.
Agua rezia, granizo, piedra espessa
Las intrica das nuves despendian
Rayos, huenos, relampagos, apriessa
Rompen los cielos y la tierra abrian.

The air grew troubl'd with portentous sound,
And mournful omens multiplied around:
With furious shock the elements engage,
*And all the winds contend in all their rage.*
*From clashing clouds their mingled torrents gush,*
*And rain, and hail, with rival fury rush:*
Bolts of loud thunder, floods of lightning rend
The opening skies, and into earth descend.
HAYLEY.

Nec ratione fluunt aliâ, stragemque propagant,
Ac quom mollis aquæ fertur natura repente
Flumine abundanti; quem largis imbribus auget
Montibus ex altis magnus decursus aquaï,
Fragmina conjiciens sylvarum, arbustaque tota:
Nec validei possunt pontes venientis aquaï
Vim subitam tolerare; ita, magno turbidus imbri,
Molibus incurrit, validis cum viribus, amnis;
Dat sonitu magno stragem; volvitque sub undis
Grandia saxa; ruit quâ quidquam fluctibus obstat.
Sic igitur debent venti quoque flamina ferri:
Quæ, veluti validum quom flumen procubuere
Quam libet in partem, trudunt res ante, ruuntque
Inpetibus crebris; interdum vortice torto
Conripiunt, rapideique rotanti turbine portant.
Quâ re etiam atque etiam sunt venti corpora cæca;
Quandoquidem factis, et moribus, æmula magnis
Amnibus inveniuntur, aperto corpore quei sunt.
Tum porro varios rerum sentimus odores;
Nec tamen ad nareis venienteis cernimus umquam;
Nec validos æstus tuimur, nec frigora quimus
Usurpare oculis; nec voces cernere suemus:

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Ver. 342. *Or sound thro' ether fleeting*—] One of the questions, observes Aulus Gellius, Noct. Att. v. 15, perpetually agitated amongst the most celebrated of the ancient philosophers, was this: "Is *sound* a "substance, or incorporeal?" But substance, continues he, is that which *either* acts *or* suffers; or, as

As when a river, down its verdant banks
Soft-gliding, sudden from the mountains round
Swells with the rushing rain—the placid stream
All limit loses; and, with furious force,
In its resistless tide, bears down, at once,
Shrubs, shatter'd trees, and bridges, weak alike
Before the tumbling torrent: such its power!—
Loud roars the raging flood, and triumphs still,
O'er rocks, and mounds, and all that else contends.
So roars th' enraged wind: so, like a flood,
Where'er it aims, before its mighty tide,
Sweeps all created things: or round, and round,
In its vast vortex curls their tortur'd forms.—
Tho' viewless, then, the matter thus that acts,
Still there is matter: and, to reason's ken,
Conspicuous as the visual texture trac'd
In the wild wave that emulates its strength.
Next, what keen eye e'er follow'd, in their course,
The light-wing'd ODOURS? or develop'd clear
The mystic forms of cold, or heat intense?
Or sound thro' ether fleeting?—yet, tho' far

---

the Greeks define it, either the agent or patient: which definition, he observes, Lucretius has endeavoured to express in these terms:

Nought can touch
But matter; or, in turn, be touched itself.

This was an especial doctrine of the sect of Epi-

Quæ tamen omnia corporeâ constare necesse est
Naturâ; quoniam sensus inpellere possunt:
Tangere enim, aut tangi, nisi corpus, nulla potest res.

Denique, fluctifrago subpensæ in litore, vestes
Uvescunt; eædem, dispessæ in sole, serescunt:
At neque, quo pacto persederit humor aquaï,
Visum est, nec rursum quo pacto fugerit æstu.
In parvas igitur parteis disspargitur humor,
Quas oculei nullâ possunt ratione videre.

Quin etiam, multis solis redeuntibus annis,
Annulus in digito subter tenuatur habendo:
Sfillicidii casus lapidem cavat: uncus aratri
Ferreus obculte decrescit vomer in arvis:

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curus. Aristotle observes, that "they believed whatever can be touched to be a body, σωμα οιονται ειναι παν απτον." And Laertius states it from Epicurus, as an opposite principle, that VOID, the precise converse of BODY, is possessed of a nature free from touch, lib. 10. The philosophy of the senses, however, is given with so much beauty and precision in the fourth book of this poem, that no commentary is necessary to him who attentively peruses it.

Ver. 356. ——*The dropping show'r*
*Scoops the rough rock.*—] The instances adduced by Lucretius are beautifully selected; and nearly all of them, for any thing we know to the contrary, original. The present elucidation, however, is as old as the book of Job, in which the attentive author observes, cap. xiv. 19. "The rivulets "wear away the stones." But it is from Bion, in all probability, that Lucretius has immediately derived it; of whom the hand of time has yet spared us the following fragment:

Εκθαμινης ραθαμιγγος, οκως λογος, αιεν ιοισας,
Χ'α λιθος ες ρωγμον κοιλαινεται.

By ceaseless drops, like eloquence, that flow,
The rigid stone is hollowed.

In general, however, Lucretius has been rather imitated than an imitator. Thus Sulpicius:

Decidens scabrum cavat unda tophum;
Ferreus vomer tenuatur agris
Splendet adtrito, digitos honorans,
Annulus auro.
Anthol. Lat. Burm. iii. 97.

From human sight remov'd, by all confess'd
Alike material; since alike the sense
They touch impulsive; and since nought can touch
But matter; or, in turn, be touch'd itself.
Thus, too, the garment that along the shore,
Lash'd by the main, imbibes the briny dew,
Dries in the sun-beam: but, alike unseen,
Falls the moist ether, or again flies off
Entire, abhorrent of the red-ey'd noon.
So fine th' attenuated spray that floats
In the pure breeze; so fugitive to sight.
A thousand proofs spring up. The ring that decks
The fair one's finger, by revolving years,
Wastes imperceptibly. The dropping show'r
Scoops the rough rock. The plough's attemper'd share

---

The tumbling torrent scoops the rugged rock;
The stern steel plough-share wastes beneath its toil;
And the gold ring the finger that adorns
Lessens by friction.

The same series of images is adopted by Ovid, with a trifling inversion of the order:

Gutta cavat lapidem, consumitur annulus usu
Et teritur pressa vomer aduncus humo.
Pont. iv. 10.

Drops scoop the stone, much use the ring consumes,
And the curved share attenuates in the glebe.

Of these examples, that of Bion's is by far the most beautiful, as containing a moral reference. On which account, also, the following, which is the production of a poet of the present day, cannot be perused without a strong feeling of intrinsic merit. It occurs in a poem, entitled Crombe Ellen, by the Rev. M. Bowles, who has often favoured the world with proofs of truly poetic inspiration.

Scenes of retir'd sublimity that fill
With fearful extacy, and holy trance,
The pausing mind!—we leave your awful gloom.
And lo! the footway plank that leads across
The narrow torrent, foaming thro' the chasm
Below; *the rugged stones are wash'd and worn*
Into a thousand shapes, and *hollows, scoop'd*
By long attrition of the ceaseless surge,
Smooth, deep, and polish'd as the marble urn,
In their hard forms. Here let us sit and watch
The struggling current burst its headlong way,
Hearing the noise it makes, and musing much
On the strange changes of this nether world, &c.

Strataque jam volgi pedibus detrita viarum
Saxea conspicimus: tum, portas propter, ahena
Signa manus dextras obtendunt adtenuari
Sæpe salutantum tactu, præterque meantum.
Hæc igitur minui, quom sint detrita, videmus;
Sed, quæ corpora decedant in tempore quoque,
Invida præclusit speciem natura videndi.

Postremo, quæquomque dies naturaque rebus
Paullatim tribuit, moderatim crescere cogens,
Nulla potest oculorum acies contenta tueri;
Nec porro quæquomque ævo macieque senescunt:
Nec, mare quæ inpendent, vesco sale saxa peresa
Quid quoque amittant in tempore, cernere possis.
Corporibus cæcis igitur natura gerit res.
Nec tamen undique corporeâ stipata tenentur

---

Ver. 360. *E'en the gigantic forms of solid brass.*] These were statues of the tutelar divinities of particular cities, some part of which, but more especially the right hand, every passenger was accustomed to touch, and even at times to kiss, to ensure his prosperity. "There is a temple of Hercules," observes Cicero, (Orat. ad Verr.) "erected by the Agrigen-" tines, not far from their public forum, held in such " esteem and veneration, that both the mouth and " chin of the statue, are considerably worn away by " the frequency with which they have approached it " with kisses as well as religious homage."

Thus Juvenal, Sat. xiv. 219:

——Cereris tangens aramque, pedemque.

The altar touching, and the foot of Ceres.

Nothing, therefore, can be more obvious than the meaning of our poet, or form a more picturesque illustration of the docrine he is enforcing.

tum portus propter *ahena*
*Signa manus dextras* obtendunt adtenuari
Sæpe *salutantum* tactu, præterque *meantum*.

Decays: and the thick pressure of the crowd,
Incessant passing, wears the stone-pav'd street.
E'en the gigantic forms of solid brass,
Plac'd at our portals, from the frequent touch
Of devotees and strangers, now display
The right hand lessen'd of its proper bulk.—
All lose, we view, by friction, their extent;
But, in what time, what particles they lose,
This envious nature from our view conceals.
Thus, too, both time and nature give to things
A gradual growth: but never yet the sight
That gradual growth explor'd; nor mark'd their fall,
Still gradual too, by age, or sure decay:
Nor trac'd what portions of incumbent rock,
Loaded with brine, the caustic wave dissolves.—
So fine the particles that form the world.
Yet not corporeal is the whole produc'd

---

And yet the Baron de Coutures is not satisfied with this common interpretation; and, in the true spirit of French gallantry, translates it thus: "and even "the brass knockers affixed to the gates of our gran- "dees are worn by the hands of those who pass by, "or who enter to pay them their respects." Et les marteaux d'airain qui sont aux portes des grands, se trouvent enfin usez par les mains de ceux qui passent ou qui viennent faire leur cour.

Superstition, as to its more prominent features, is the same in all ages: and what Lucretius records as the practice of Rome in his era, is the practice in the same city at the present moment: the object of religious veneration alone having been changed. For the bronze statue of St. Peter, in the celebrated church that bears his name, has at this hour, its advanced foot under which the pope daily places his head, obviously marked and worn bright from the frequency of the kisses impressed upon it by the multitudes of devotees who throng towards it, from all quarters, for a benediction. The same superstitious affection was evinced towards the statue of Serapis; and still continues to be exhibited by the Siamese, in the worship of their chief idol.

Omnia naturâ; namque est in rebus INANE:
Quod tibi cognosse in multis erit utile rebus;
Nec sinet errantem dubitare, et quærere semper
De summâ rerum, et nostris diffidere dictis.
[Quapropter locus est intactus inane, vacansque.] 335
Quod, si non esset, nullâ ratione moveri
Res possent; namque, obficium quod corporis exstat,
Obficere atque obstare, id in omni tempore adesset

---

Ver. 376. *Search where thou wilt, an* INCORPOREAL VOID.] The poet, in these verses, advances another axiom or principle of the Epicurean school. He has already established the existence and imperishability of *solid bodies;* and he now endeavours to demonstrate the existence of a *void* or *space* in which such bodies interact. These terms, *space* and *void*, and sometimes *region*, are, therefore, used in the prosecution of his observations, synonymously, and to gratify the ear with a rich interchange of expressions. This existence in the physical world, observes Empiricus, is denominated a *void* or *vacuum*, because it is destitute of *body;* a *space*, because it *contains* bodies; and a *region*, because bodies *are moved* in it.

The principle here advanced, the poet endeavours to establish by four beautiful and cogent illustrations; and which, with his casual reply to objections that had frequently been urged by other writers, extend to verse 479.—If there be no vacuum, or incorporeal space, the universe would be all and equally solid—and nothing could possibly move, because nothing could possibly give way to admit of motion. But even the common appearances of things convince us, in a vast variety of instances, that substances deemed the most solid and compact, are, nevertheless, possessed of some degree of vacuum. Were this not a fact, were all bodies equally solid and compact, every thing would be possessed of an equal weight. And with whatever speed the space, existing between the parts of bodies separated abruptly and by force, may be filled with air, prior to the arrival of such air there must have been a complete vacuum.

The Cardinal Polignac, who was a strong adherent to every doctrine of the Cartesian school, excepting, indeed, its vortices, has devoted almost the whole of the second book of his Anti-Lucretius to the consideration of this subject, and to the entire denial of all vacuum whatever.

The arguments of Lucretius, as well as those of more modern philosophers, as Spinosa, Gassendi, and Newton, pass in review before him, and he controverts them with no small dexterity; whilst he advances opposite arguments to support the Cartesian system of a plenum. Space, he observes, from the properties attributed to it by Lucretius, is, in reality, a God. For, if space be immutable and infinite, there is no reason why it should not be intelligent and almighty.—If, moreover, it be divisible, and by such division, admit bodies to pass through it, it cannot be infinite.—In this case, too, it must be composed of parts, and consequently corporeal. But that which is pure vacuum cannot be corporeal. Vacant space, therefore, is a mere chimera of the imagination; a thing that can have no real existence. But I must refer the reader, for further information, to the poem itself; as I must also to the works of Bayle, Euler, and other Anti-Cartesians, for the ratiocination by which this specious mode of arguing has been completely subverted.

By nature. In created things exists,
Search where thou wilt, an INCORPOREAL VOID.
This mark, and half philosophy is thine.
Doubtful no longer shalt thou wander: taught
Th' entire of things, and by our verse convinc'd.
And know this VOID is SPACE UNTOUCH'D and PURE.
Were SPACE like this vouchsaf'd not, nought could move:
Corporeal forms would still resist, and strive

---

Space, or void, is, in the present day, I believe, universally assented to; and seems to be demonstrated by the best chemical experiments. M. de la Place has long asserted, that the molecules of bodies are infinitely larger than the diameter of these molecules; and, among other demonstrations, has appealed to the extreme facility with which the rays of light penetrate transparent substances in every direction. And M. Haüy, who espouses the same doctrine, has advanced proofs still more decisive, from the symmetrical arrangement of the molecules of various natural bodies in a state of crystalization. See his Traité Elémentaire de Physique, lately published at Paris; a work well worth consulting by every one who is attached to the science of natural philosophy.

Ver. 380. *And know this* VOID *is* SPACE UNTOUCH'D *and* PURE.] The original of this verse, which is certainly unnecessary, and in the original strangely unconnected, has been condemned in strong terms by Bentley and Wakefield. The latter has, therefore, as will be found in the opposite page, included it in brackets; and advanced a conjecture, that it was at first nothing more than a mere marginal reference of an ancient transcriber, which, at length, forced its uncouth way into the text itself.

Ver. 381. *Were* SPACE *like this vouchsaf'd not, nought could move:*] It was not the Epicureans alone, but the Pythagoreans, and many other sects of philosophers, who contended for the existence of a vacuum: a dogma first introduced among men of letters, either by Democritus or Leucippus, the founders of the atomic school. Laertius, therefore, speaking of the former of these philosophers, asserts, δοκε αυτω τοδε αρχας ειναι τωδ' ὁλων ατομους και κενον: "It appeared to him, that atoms, and a vacuum, were the principles of all things." Epicurus, however, improved upon the doctrine of Democritus; and though he allowed and contended strenuously for the existence of a void, he did not admit that void to be a principle of things, maintaining it to afford nothing more than a mere place for the principles of things, which were solid, to exist in. He likewise added the property of weight to those of magnitude and figure: and, conceiving that the vortices, or regular routines of motion, in which, according to Democritus, all material atoms proceeded, constituted a necessity fatal to all moral liberty, and indispensably reduced the human soul to a mere machine, he discarded them from his creed; and, to the perpendicular and reflexive motions allowed by atomic philosophers in general, he introduced a third; and supposed that atoms, or the seeds of things, had an extraordinary power of declining from a right line, and moving spontaneously, and without collision or impetus, in an oblique or curvilinear direction. From which alteration, as will be more fully explained in the second book of this poem, he imagined he obtained a foundation for moral election.

Omnibus: haud igitur quidquam procedere possent,
Principium quoniam cedendi nulla daret res.
At nunc per maria, ac terras, sublimaque cœli,
Multa modis multis variâ ratione moveri
Cernimus ante oculos: quæ, si non esset inane,
Non tam solicito motu privata carerent,
Quam genita omnino nullâ ratione fuissent:
Undique materies quoniam stipata quiesset.
Præterea, quamvis solidæ res esse putentur,
Hinc tamen esse licet raro cum corpore cernas.
In saxis, ac speluncis, permanat aquarum
Liquidus humor, et uberibus flent omnia guttis:
Dissupat in corpus sese cibus omne animantum:
Crescunt arbusta, et fetus in tempore fundunt:
Quod cibus in totas, usque ab radicibus imis,
Per truncos ac per ramos diffunditur omneis:
Inter sæpta meant voces, et clusa domorum
Transvolitant: rigidum permanat frigus ad ossa.
Quod, nisi inania sint, quâ possent corpora quæque
Transire, haud ullâ fieri ratione videres.

Denique, quur alias aliis præstare videmus
Pondere res rebus, nihilo majore figurâ?
Nam, si tantumdem est in lanæ glomere, quantum
Corporis in plumbo est, tantumdem pendere par est;

With forms corporeal, nor consent to yield;
While the great progress of creation ceas'd.
But what more clear in earth or heav'n sublime,
Or the vast ocean, than, in various modes,
That various matter moves? which, but for SPACE,
'Twere vain t' expect: and vainer yet to look
For procreative power, educing still
Kinds from their kinds through all revolving time.
True, things are solid deem'd: but know that those
Deem'd so the most are rare and unconjoin'd.
From rocks, and caves, translucent lymph distils,
And, from the tough bark, drops the healing balm.
The genial meal, with mystic power, pervades
Each avenue of life; and the grove swells,
And yields its various fruit, sustain'd alone
From the pure food propell'd thro' root and branch.
Sound pierces marble; through reclusest walls
The bosom-tale transmits: and the keen frost
E'en to the marrow winds its sinuous way.—
Destroy all vacuum, then, close ev'ry pore,
And, if thou canst, for such events account.
Say, why of equal bulk, in equal scale,
Are things oft found unequal in their poise?
O'er the light wool the grosser lead prevails
With giant force. But were th' amount alike

Corporis obficium est quoniam premere omnia deorsum:
Contra autem natura manet sine pondere inanis.
Ergo, quod magnum est æque, leviusque videtur,
Nimirum plus esse sibi declarat inanis;
Ut contra gravius plus in se corporis esse
Dedicat, et multo vacuum minus intus habere.

Est igitur nimirum id, quod ratione sagaci
Quærimus, admixtum rebus; quod inane vocamus.
Illud, in hiis rebus ne te deducere vero
Possit, quod queidam fingunt, præcurrere cogor.

---

Ver. 418. *But some there are such doctrines who deny:*] In the progress of this poem, we shall have abundant illustrations of the *general truth* of that apophthegm of Solomon, that "there "is nothing new under the sun." The arguments adduced in favour of a vacuum, and which have the appearance of being unanswerable, by Democritus and Epicurus, were, nevertheless, controverted by Zeno and Aristotle; who contended that all nature was full of matter, and there was no vacuity in any point of creation. Lucretius, and other pupils of the Epicurean school, adhered to, and continued to advance the same doctrine at Rome: they were, opposed by Cicero and Seneca. The same arguments were adduced, and the same objections retorted. The world grew tired of the contest, and it subsided. At length Des Cartes and Newton arose, and the contest was revived: a material plenum was contended for by the former, and a vacuum as strenuously asserted by the latter. Like the revival of an old fashion, the dispute was once more new to the world; and all were anxious to become ontologists and mathematicians. Sir Isaac had, undoubtedly, the advantage of his adversary. His arguments, or rather those which had been formerly advanced, and were now advanced again, were by far the most cogent; and his proselytes the most numerous. But the world was not fully convinced on the death of both of them. The defence of a plenum was entailed on Leibnitz, and that of a vacuum on Euler. The *same demonstrations* were *mutually* advanced, and the *same* objections mutually urged. Am I doing injustice to the ingenuity of the moderns? Let, then, two or three examples suffice. More might easily be selected, but I will not so far trespass on the reader's time.

"All bodies about the earth," observes Sir Isaac Newton, in answer to the doctrine of Des Cartes, "gravitate towards the earth; and the weights of "all bodies, equally distant from the earth's centre, are as the quantities of matter in those bodies," &c. Princip. lib. ii.

Of matter each contain'd, alike the weight
Would prove perpetual: for, from matter sole,
Flows weight, and moment, ever prone to earth:
While vacant space nor weight nor moment knows.
Where things surpoise, then, though of equal bulk,
There MATTER most resides: but where ascends
The beam sublime, the rising substance holds
A smaller share, and larger leaves the VOID.
Hence draws the sage his creed: in all produc'd
Finds vacuum still, and calls that vacuum SPACE.
But some there are such doctrines who deny:
And urge in proof, deceptive, that the wave

---

Compare this axiom with that proposed by Lucretius, commencing with an interrogation at verse 403, and continued to verse 420.

Say why of equal bulk, in equal scale,
Are things oft found unequal in their poise?
O'er the light wool the grosser lead prevails
With giant force, &c.

For other instances, see the note that immediately follows; that on v. 510, v. 536, and v. 1028.

Ver. 419. *And urge in proof, deceptive, that the wave, &c.*] There may be a plenum, observes Des Cartes, but motion may, nevertheless, commence and continue: "every part of matter that is moved (to copy from the abstract of his doctrine on this subject, as given by the late ingenious Adam Smith) thrusting some other out of its place, and that some other still, and so on. But, to avoid an infinite progress, and harmonize with his own vortices, he supposed that the matter which any body pushed before it, rolled immediately backwards to supply the place of that matter which flowed in behind it: *as we may observe in the swimming of a fish, that the water, which it pushes before it, immediately rolls backwards to supply the place of what flows in behind it; and thus forms a small circle, or vortex, round the body of the fish.*" Essays on Philosophical Subjects.

Whether or not Des Cartes knew at the time he adopted this illustration of his doctrine, he was only repeating what had been long advanced before, and what, in the verses in question, is admirably refuted by Lucretius, I cannot tell. But the Cardinal Polignac, notwithstanding this refutation of our poet, still chose to continue the same plausible, but unfounded, illustration, in his Anti-Lucretius, though he was well acquainted with the reply that was already prepared for him. Anti-Lucr. lib. ii. 673.

Rem res dum pellit, quæris quo pulsa recedit, &c.

Sir Richard Blackmore has borrowed the same image from our poet; but in opposition to the philosophy of Aristotle. Creation, b. i.

Nor could *the fish divide the stiffen'd floods.*

Cedere squamigeris latices nitentibus aiunt,
Et liquidas aperire vias, quia post loca pisces
Linquant, quo possint cedentes confluere undæ:
Sic alias quoque res inter se posse moveri,
Et mutare locum, quamvis sint omnia plena.
Scilicet id falsâ totum ratione receptum est.
Nam, quo squamigeri poterunt procedere tandem,
Ni spatium dederint latices? Concedere porro
Quo poterunt undæ, quom pisces ire nequibunt?
Aut igitur motu privandum est corpora quæque,
Aut esse admixtum dicundum est rebus inane;
Unde initum primum capiat res quæque movendi.

Postremo, duo de concurso corpora lata
Si cita dissiliant, nempe aër omne necesse est,
Inter corpora quod fiat, possidat inane.
Is porro quamvis, circum celerantibus auris,
Confluat, haud poterit tamen uno tempore totum
Conpleri spatium: nam primum quemque necesse est
Obcupet ille locum, deinde omnia possideantur.
Quod, si forte aliquis, quom corpora dissiluere,
Tum putat id fieri, quia se condenseat aër,

---

Ver. 433. *When force mechanic severs, &c.*—] I am very much mistaken if there be any thing confused or obscure in the verbiage of this proposition. I am sure there is not in the original; and I have endeavoured there should not be in the translation.—It is obvious, however, that Creech did not enter

Not through imagin'd pores admits the race
With glitt'ring scales—but yields at once, and opes
The liquid path; and occupies, in turn,
The space behind the aureat fish deserts.
Thus, too, that all things act: the spot possess'd
Exchanging sole, whilst each continues full.
Believe them not. If nought of space the wave
Give to its gilded tenants, how, resolve,
Feel they the power t' advance? and if t' advance
They know not, how can, next, the wave thus yield?—
Or matter ne'er can move, then, or within
Some VOID must mix through all its varying forms,
Whence springs alone the pow'r of motion first.
When force mechanic severs, and, abrupt,
Drives two broad bodies distant, quick between
Flows the light air, and fills the vacuum form'd.
But ne'er so rapid can the light air flow
As to forbid all void; since, step by step,
It still must rush till the whole space be clos'd.
Nor credit those who urge such bodies sole
Can part because the liquid air, compress'd
To closer texture, gives the needed space.

---

into the idea the poet meaned to convey, when he reached this passage: and his version of it is, hence, so incorrect, so confused, and foreign from the purpose, that his annotator, to whom he is much indebted, has thought it necessary to explain the translation itself, by a commentary of three pages.

Errat: nam vacuum tum fit, quod non fuit ante,
Et repletur item, vacuum quod constitit ante;
Nec tali ratione potest denserier aër:
Nec, si jam posset, sine inani posset, opinor,
Ipse in se trahere, et parteis conducere in unum.
Quapropter, quamvis caussando multa moreris,
Esse in rebus inane tamen fateare necesse est.

Multaque præterea tibi possunt conmemorando
Argumenta fidem dictis conradere nostris:
Verum animo satis hæc vestigia parva sagaci
Sunt, per quæ possis cognoscere cætera tute.
Namque canes, ut montivagæ persæpe feraï
Naribus inveniunt, injectis frunde, quietes,
Quom semel institerunt vestigia certa viaï;
Sic alid ex alio per te tute ipse videre
Talibus in rebus poteris, cæcasque latebras
Insinuare omneis, et verum protrahere inde.

Quod, si pigraris, paullumve recesseris abs re,
Hoc tibi de plano possum promittere, Memmi;

---

Ver. 453. *For as the hound, &c.*—] The same simile is adopted by Sophocles, in the opening of his Ajax Flagellifer. It is thus Minerva addresses Ulysses:

——ευδε σ' εκφερει
Κυνος Λακαινης ὡς τις ευρινος βασις, &c.

——like Sparta's hound, of scent
Sagacious, do'st thou trace him, nor in vain.
Franklin.

It is impossible to read either of these passages, without being reminded of Homer's lively description of the faithful Argus that died partly of years, and partly of joy, on the sudden return of Ulysses to Ithaca: and it is probable Lucretius had it in his recollection at the time of composing the simile.

Αν δε κυαν κεφαλην τε και ουατα κειμενος εσχεν
Αργος Οδυσσηος ταλασιφρονος, &c.
Odyss. lib. xvii.

Such feeble reas'ners, in opposing VOID,
A double VOID confess: for, first, perforce,
A void they own, where void was none before,
Betwixt the substance sever'd; and bring next
A proof surmountless that the air itself
Throng'd with a prior void: else how, to bounds
Of closer texture, could it e'er contract?
A thousand facts crowd round me: to the same
Converging all. But single these, I ween,
Though but the footsteps of the mighty whole,
To fix thy faith, and guide thee to the rest.
For as the hound, when once the tainted dew
His nostrils taste, pursues the vagrant fox
O'er hills, and dales, and drags him from his lair;
So may'st thou trace from fact associate fact,
Through ev'ry maze, through ev'ry doubtful shade,
Till Truth's bright form, at length, thy labours crown.
Nor tardy be the toil, for much remains.
So oft, O MEMMIUS! from the sacred fount

---

With him the youth pursu'd the goat or fawn,
Or trac'd the mazy lev'ret o'er the lawn.—
Him no fell savage on the plain withstood,
None 'scap'd him bosom'd in the gloomy wood;
His eye how piercing, and his scent how true,
To wind the vapour in the tainted dew.

POPE'S ODYSSEY, b. xvii.

We recognise our own poet, however, in the following of his antagonist.

Ut *canis* occultam sylvis deprendere damam
*Nare* sagax, et odore sequi *vestigia* prædæ
Venari docuit. ANTI-LUCR. vi. 50.

Thus learn we from the hound to hunt, of nose
Keen to pursue through tangled woods the deer,
Skulking from sight, and track his tainted steps.

Usque adeo largos haustus de fontibus amnis
Lingua meo suavis diti de pectore fundet,
Ut verear, ne tarda prius per membra senectus
Serpat, et in nobis vitaï claustra resolvat,
Quam tibi de quâ vis unâ re versibus omnis
Argumentorum sit copia missa par aureis.
Sed nunc, ut repetam cœptum pertexere dictis.
Omnis, ut est, igitur, per se, natura duabus
Constitit in rebus: nam corpora sunt, et inane;
Hæc in quo sita sunt, et quâ divorsa moventur.
Corpus enim per se communis dedicat esse
Sensus: quoi nisi prima fides fundata valebit,
Haud erit, obcultis de rebus quo referentes
Confirmare animos quidquam ratione queamus.
Tum porro locus, ac spatium, quod inane vocamus,

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Ver. 467. *Know, then, th'* ENTIRE OF NATURE *sole consists*

Of SPACE *and* BODY:] Thus Epicurus, in his Epistle to Herodotus; το παν εστι τη μεν σωμα, πηδε κενον, "the whole is partly body, partly void." This, of course, opens to us the tenet of the Epicurean sect, as to the human soul. But as no such doctrine is the immediate object of discussion before us, and as its entire consideration is reserved for a different part of the work, I forbear entering into the controversy at present. The axiom Lucretius is immediately endeavouring to demonstrate, is, that every fact, or matter, occurring in life, and which cannot strictly be resolved into either vacuum or body, is a consequence or collateral attendant upon the one or the other: it is either a CONJUNCTION or property of matter, or an EVENT or accident flowing from its operations. This is more fully elucidated from verse 500 to 509, and developes another principle of the Epicurean hypothesis. It is thus Diogenes Laertius conveys to us the sentiments of the founder of the sect: Παρα δε ταυτα (σωματα nempe και κενον) ουθεν ουτε επιγοηθηναι δυναται, ουτε περιληπτως, ουτε αναλογως τοις περιληπτοις, ως καθ' ολας φυσεις λαμβανομενα, και μη ως τα, τουτων συμπτωματα η συμβεβηκοτα, λεγομενα. "It is impossible for the mind to understand, or even conceive of any thing besides body and vacuum; or even any thing resembling them, possessed of a distinct and appropriate nature, and which will not rank, as an accident or event, under these denominations."

Ver. 471. ——*if we trust not sense,*] This axiom

By wisdom fed, so largely have I drank,
And such the dulcet doctrines yet untold,
That age may first unman us, and break down
The purple gates of life, ere the bold muse
Exhaust the boundless subject. Haste we, then,
Each pulse is precious, haste we to proceed.

Know, then, th' ENTIRE OF NATURE sole consists
Of SPACE and BODY: this the substance mov'd,
And that the area of its motive pow'r.
That there is BODY, ev'ry sense we boast
Demonstrates strong: and, if we trust not sense,
Source of all science, then the mind itself,
Perplex'd and hopeless, must still wander on,
In reas'ning lost, to ev'ry doubt a prey.

---

of the necessity of trusting to the external senses, and the superiority of their evidence over evidence of a different kind, forms the foundation of the philosophy of Dr. Beattie, Dr. Reid, and other pillars of "*the Reflective School*" of Scotland, as they lately seemed desirous of calling themselves; in opposition to the *analogical* school, which, generally speaking, might embrace almost all philosophers but themselves. The arguments adduced by these literati may, in some degree, and as they were principally intended, attack the systems of Hume and Berkley, who denied an external existence; but they must necessarily be feeble in controverting the doctrines of Spinoza, Hobbes, or Des Cartes. See note on verse 535 of this book, and verse 488 of book iv. as also the Appendix to the prefixed life of Lucretius.

This appeal of mankind at large to the testimony of the external senses, is noticed by Ariosto, in his Orlando Furioso; who is fearful that, on account of the prevalence of such principle, his mysterious tales, so totally repugnant to all the experience they offer, will obtain but little credit with the world.

Il schiocco volgo non gli vuol dar fede
Se non le vede, e tocca chiare, e piane.
Per questo io so, che l'inesperienza
Farà al mio canto dar pora credenza.
CANT. vii.

The herd unletter'd nothing will believe
But what their senses plainly can perceive.
Hence I shall ne'er with common minds prevail,
And gain but trivial credit for my tale.
HOOLE.

Si nullum foret, haud quâquam sita corpora possent
Esse, neque omnino quoquam divorsa meare :
Id, quod jam supra tibi paullo obtendimus ante.

Præterea, nihil est, quod possis dicere ab omni
Corpore sejunctum, secretumque esse ab inani ;
Quoi quasi tertia sit numero natura reperta.
Nam, quodquomque erit, esse aliquid debebit id ipsum
Augmine vel grandi, vel parvo denique, dum sit ;
Quoi si tactus erit quam vis levis, exiguusque,
Corporis augebit numerum, summamque sequetur :
Sin intactile erit, nullâ de parte quod ullam
Rem prohibere queat per se transire meantem ;
Scilicet hocc' id erit vacuum, quod inane vocamus.

Præterea, per se quodquomque erit, aut faciet quid,
Aut aliis fungi debebit agentibus ipsum,
Aut erit, ut possunt in eo res esse, gerique :
At facere, et fungi, sine corpore nulla potest res ;
Nec præbere locum porro, nisi inane vacansque,
Ergo præter inane, et corpora, tertia per se
Nulla potest rerum in numero natura relinqui ;
Nec, quæ sub sensus cadat ullo tempore nostros,
Nec ratione animi quam quisquam possit apisci.
Nam, quæquomque cluent, aut hiis conjuncta duabus

And were not SPACE, were vacuum not allow'd,
In nought could bodies, then, their powers display
Of various action: each compressing each
To motion fatal, as already sung.
  Nor is there aught such vacant SPACE besides,
And MATTER close-embodied, can be trac'd
A substance forming discrepant from each.
Search where thou wilt, whate'er occurs to view,
Of bulk minute, or large, tho' e'en its form
Change with the hour, if tangible it prove,
This stamps it MATTER, and forbids all doubt.
But if intangible, throughout if still
To matter pervious, act where'er it may,
'Tis, then, void SPACE, and can be nought besides.
  All things, moreo'er, a substance must evince
Acting, or suffering act; or, form the sphere
In which to act or suffer. But to act
Or suffer action, must be MATTER's sole;
While SPACE alone that needed sphere admits.
  Nought then, 'twixt SPACE and MATTER can subsist
Of INTERMEDIATE SUBSTANCE: nought be trac'd
By keenest efforts of th' external sense,
Or by the meditating mind deduc'd.
All else we meet with, or conceive but these
Are mere CONJUNCTIONS, or EVENTS attach'd.

Rebus ea invenies, aut horum eventa videbis.
Conjunctum est id, quod numquam sine perniciali
Discidio potis est sejungi, seque gregari:
Pondus utei saxi est, calor ignis, liquor aquaï,
Tactus corporibus cunctis, intactus inani.
Servitium contra, paupertas, divitiæque,
Libertas, bellum, concordia, cætera, quorum
Adventu manet incolomis natura, abituque;
Hæc solitei sumus, ut par est, eventa vocare.

Tempus item per se non est, sed rebus ab ipsis
Consequitur sensus, transactum quid sit in ævo;
Tum, quæ res instet, quid porro deinde sequatur:
Nec per se quemquam tempus sentire fatendum est
Semotum ab rerum motu, placidâque quiete.

Denique Tyndaridem raptam, belloque subactas
Troiugenas genteis quom dicunt esse, videndum est,

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Ver. 510. *E'en* TIME, *that measures all things*,—] Pythagoras, Heraclitus, and some other philosophers, contended that Time was a substance; but the Stoics believed it to be insubstantial, though not precisely in the same manner as the Epicureans. The express dogma of Epicurus himself is thus rehearsed by Gassendi: "Time is merely an event of the imagination, or an attribute given to things by the mind, while contemplating them either as enduring, or ceasing; as possessing a longer or a shorter existence; as enjoying such existence, as having enjoyed it, or as being about to enjoy it." It is a definition which, for accuracy, may challenge that of any of the moderns; and is altogether consentaneous with the opinion of Mr. Locke: "To understand TIME and ETERNITY aright," says this first of modern philosophers, "we ought, with attention, to consider what *idea* it is we have of *duration*, and how we came by it. 'Tis evident to one who will but observe what passes in his own mind, that there is a train of ideas which constantly succeed one another in his understanding as long as he is awake. Reflection on these appearances of several ideas, one after another in our minds, is that which furnishes us with the idea of *succession*: and the distance between the appearance of any two ideas in our minds, is that which we call *duration*. Having thus

And know the learned by CONJUNCTIONS name
Those powers in each perpetual that inhere,
And ne'er can part till VOID or MATTER cease.
Thus heat to fire, fluidity to streams,
Weight to the rock, to all of MATTER touch,
And want of touch to SPACE. While Discord, Peace,
Oppression, Freedom, Poverty, and Wealth,
And aught that else, of matter, and of space
Lives independent, though engender'd hence,
Are termed, and justly, by the wise EVENTS.
E'en TIME, that measures all things, of itself
Exists not; from the mind alone produc'd,
As, link by link, contemplating minute,
Things present, past, or future: for, of TIME,
From these disjoin'd, in motion, or at rest
Tranquil and still, what mortal can conceive?
Thus spring EVENTS to birth. The rape renown'd
Of beauteous HELEN, or the fall of TROY,

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got the idea of duration, the next thing natural for the mind to do, is to get some *measure* of this common duration, whereby it might judge of its different lengths, and consider the distinct order wherein several things exist; without which a great part of our knowledge would be confused, and a great part of history rendered very useless. This consideration of *duration*, as set out by certain periods, and marked by certain measures, or epochs, is that, I think, which most properly we call TIME." Hum. Underst. b. ii. c. 14.

Ver. 516. *Thus spring* EVENTS *to birth.*—] Actions can only be said to exist, speaking with logical precision, in consequence of the existence of the substratum or body whence they issue. They could not have existed of themselves; and without such substratum would never have existed at all. An illicit amour can have no existence independently of the persons consenting to it. The fall of a city supposes the prior existence of such city, and cannot, as an existence, be detached from the city itself.

Ver. 517. —*beauteous* HELEN, *or the fall of* TROY,] The story is so well known, as to require little or no explanation. Helen, the grace and loveliness of

Ne forte hæc per se cogant nos esse fateri;
Quando ea secla hominum, quorum hæc eventa fuerunt,
Inrevocabilis abstulerit jam præterita ætas.
Namque aliud terris, aliud legionibus ipsis,
Eventum dici poterit, quodquomque erit actum.

Denique, materies si rerum nulla fuisset,
Nec locus, ac spatium, res in quo quæque geruntur;
Numquam, Tyndaridis formæ conflatus amore,
Ignis, Alexandri Phrygio sub pectore gliscens,

whose form have been represented by poets and historians as perfect and unrivalled, and whose very name, derived probably from ελω (traho, pertraho), implies seduction, is fabulously reported to have been the daughter of Leda by Jupiter. Theseus, we are told, eloped with her ere she had completed her tenth year: she was overtaken, however, before she appears to have reached the Gretna Green of Greece, by her brothers Castor and Pollux, and rescued from the hands of her unfortunate lover. At a more mature and proper age she received the addresses of Menelaus, king of Sparta, and was married to him. It was not long afterwards that the elegant Paris, son of Priam king of Troy, was presented to her at the Spartan court; and she consented to a second elopement. The Spartan monarch followed her, but in vain; and, stung by revenge and disappointed love, he excited the Grecian States to declare war against Priam, for the countenance he seemed to afford his voluptuous son. The war, as every one knows, terminated in the subversion of Troy, and the destruction of Priam and his family. The wooden horse or machine, by which the utter ruin of this celebrated city was accomplished, with every attendant circumstance, is inimitably related by Virgil in his Æneid, b. ii. and Homer, in his Odyssey, b. 4.

Ver. 517. ——*or the fall of* Troy,] Had Lucretius been a writer of the present day, he must have sought for other examples than those he has now adduced, or the fastidious pen of some modern critics would have been levelled against him. Le Bossu, in his Essay on the Epic, and Mr. Bryant, in an express Dissertation on the subject, and with a gigantic mass of erudition, have attempted to prove that there never was such a place as Troy, or at least on the *plain of Ilium*; and of course that the history our poet refers to never had an existence of any kind, either dependent or independent: and that the whole story of the Trojan war is a fable invented by Homer, and unfounded in fact. Their arguments are principally derived from the difficulty of determining the spot where, according to the geographic description of Homer, the city of Troy must have been erected, if it had ever been erected at all: from the very different situations in which different critics have placed it; from the entire want of all traces and remains of this celebrated city even in the time of Lucan; and from the uncertainty of intelligence possesed by the Greeks themselves prior to their olympiads, which did not commence till some centuries after the supposed conquest of Troy.

When a man of erudition once entertains an opi-

Tho' deem'd existences, yet of themselves
Existed never: on material things,
On place and persons acting, or coerc'd,
Alone dependent. These revolving years
Have long th' irrevocable doom assign'd:
And rape and conquest, as EVENTS that claim'd
From these existence, now exist no more.—
Had ne'er been form'd the matter, or the space,
Whose pow'r conjunctive gave those scenes to be;
No fire had e'er, from lovely HELEN's eyes,
Glanc'd thro' the bosom of the TROJAN youth,

---

nion different from that of the world at large, it is curious to observe with what facility he can muster up the whole phalanx of his learning in demonstration of the fancy for which he means to contend. And hence, Mr. Bryant, it must be confessed, has written with much plausibility upon this well controverted though heterodox subject. But he has been opposed several antagonists, who have all proved themselves worthy of the cause they have undertaken to defend. Mr. Wakefield has replied to him with an equal degree of classical erudition: and with the potent shield of a Hector, has maintained the classic towers of Troy against the intended overthrow of this literary Ajax. Mr. Dallaway has also, in his "Excursions to the Troad," &c. followed the footsteps of Mr. Wakefield, and exerted his abilities on the same subject with much critical learning, local accuracy, and desirable success. But Mr. Bryant appears to have met with a still sturdier champion in M. Chevalier, whose "Tableau de la Plaine de Troye" is a publication deserving of all praise; and replete with arguments so subversive of the observations of both Le Bossu and Mr. Bryant, that the latter gentleman could not refrain from a reply to this truly ingenious pamphlet: in which, however, he does not appear to me to have been more successful than in his first attempt. A concise account of this elaborate *Tableau* of M. Chevalier, is given in vol. iv. of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, by Professor Dalzel; who, in corroboration of the truth of its statements, has also added many ingenious passages and illustrations from historians and subsequent travellers. To complete the triumph of Homer, Dr. Chandler and Mr. Gell have since satisfactorily, and from ocular observation, pointed out the very spot on which the city was built, and identified the site of its gates, its groves, and its rivers.

Ver. 527. *No fire had e'er, from lovely* HELEN's *eyes,*
*Glanc'd thro' the bosom of the* TROJAN *youth.*]

The effect of love is variously described, as well as accounted for, by the poets. Generally, however, the instrument supposed to be employed, is either a dart from the eye, producing a wound, as in v. 36, of the present book; or else a species of subtle and irresistible flame, eroding and consuming the bosom, as in the present passage. In the opening of book iv. of the Æneid, Virgil introduces both these metaphors,

Vulnus alit venis, et cæco carpitur igni.
She feeds her *wound, and pines with secret* fire.

Clara adcendisset sævi certamina belli ;
Nec clam durateus Troianis Pergama partu
Inflammasset equus nocturno Graiugenarum :
Perspicere ut possis, res gestas funditus omneis
Non ita, utei corpus, per se constare, neque esse :
Nec ratione cluere eâdem, quâ constat inane :
Sed magis ut merito possis eventa vocare
Corporis, atque loci, res in quo quæque gerantur.
Corpora sunt porro partim primordia rerum,
Partim concilio quæ constant principiorum.

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Petrarc follows our poet's latter image alone in the ensuing description :

I che l'esca amorosa al petto avea
Qual maraviglia se di subito arsi ?

What wonder, that I burn and smart,
Since love's keen torch inflames my heart.

Solomon has beautifully and boldly introduced another system of imagery, the elegance, and indeed the meaning of which has seldom been sufficiently explained. Under his creative powers, the fascinating fair becomes the surrounding wall of a fortified city ; which was often erected with consummate ſkill, beautified with all the ornaments of architecture, and over different parts of which were projected towers or turrets for the purpose of repelling the assailing foe ; in whose construction and finish the taste of the artist was principally exerted, and which were hence frequently denominated *towers of ivory* or *of silver*. The triumphant fair being thus generally resembled to the beautiful and ornamental wall of a defensive city—her white and swelling bosom is next compared to the white and swelling turrets projected from its surface,—to those elegant, but dangerous prominences, which were equally formed for the purpose of attack or repulsion, and which no man, in either case, can approach without extreme peril. With this introductory explanation the passage I refer to is equally exquisite and obvious.

Call her a wall—' and' two towers of silver
Will we *build upon her.*—
I myself am a wall,
And my bosom resembles two towers.
Chap. viii. 9. 10.

For a still farther illustration, the reader may consult my version and notes upon this elegant simile, Sacred Idyls, p. 59 and 206.

Ver. 531. *Pour'd forth at night,*—] Hence Virgil,

Invadunt urbem somno vinoque sepultam :
Cæduntur vigiles : portisque patentibus omnes
Accipiunt socios, atque agmina conscia jungunt.
Æn. ii. 265.

A nameless crowd succeed ; their forces join
T' invade the town, *oppress'd with sleep* and wine.
Those few they find awake, first meet their fate,
Then to their fellows they unbar the gate.
Dryden.

Ver. 535. *Know too, that bodies, in their frame, consist,*] The poet proceeds to develope another principle of the

And kindled the fierce flames of storied war:
No giant horse the fell Achaian throngs
Pour'd forth at night, subverting Priam's realm.
Mark, then, how different facts exist and blend
From void or matter; and how justly term'd
Of place and body the deriv'd events.

Know, too, that bodies, in their frame consist,
Part, of primordial atoms uncombin'd,

---

Epicurean philosophy; and conceiving that he has established the existence of matter and space, and demonstrated that no other principle whatever can be detected throughout the Universe, he next advances that matter is composed of two kinds, elementary atoms, impenetrably solid and compact, and substances compounded of such atoms with certain proportions of vacuum, consequently unsolid and porous. The elementary atoms of matter, he contends, must be solid, as being the precise converse of vacuum, and having no common property with it; that vacuum itself could not be proved to exist, or measured as to its extent, if it were not bounded by solid substances; and that, thus, they mutually demonstrate the existence of each other.

These primal or solid atoms are the *ultima*, as the poet afterwards endeavours to demonstrate, or smallest bodies of actual existence. The mind, undoubtedly, may conceive of bodies more minute, for it may conceive of these minutest substances of actual existence as divided, and as infinitely divisible. But our philosophic bard attempts to prove (ver. 675.) that if we admit the doctrine of an infinite physical divisibility, or, in other words, do not contend for an extreme into which bodies may be divisible, and beyond which they cannot be divided, the grossest absurdities must follow. Every thing would, in this case, be infinite alike, as possessed of infinite parts; and it would, as in a variety of instances it has done in modern times, lead us to the total disbelief of matter of any kind; and to become pupils of Spinoza, Hobbs, Berkley, or Hume, according as the collateral tenets of these philosophers principally influenced our judgment.

The supposition, that these primal atoms were the least or ultimate bodies of existing nature, was an improvement upon the system of Democritus, and a doctrine peculiar to the Epicurean school. Thus Dionysius observes, as quoted by Eusebius, Præp. xiv. 7. τοσουτον διεφονεται οσον ὁ μεν ελαχιστας πασας και δια τουτο ανεπαισθητου, ὁ δε Δημοκριτος, και μεγιστας ειναι τινας ατομους υπελαβεν; "they disagreed in as much as the atoms of Epicurus were all least and ultimate, and therefore insensible; whilst Democritus conceived many of them to be of considerable magnitude." And Heraclitus, therefore, who adhered to the old atomic school, has, occasionally, denominated these latter ογκους, tumid, or massy.

But atoms that are perfectly solid are indissoluble, and can never be separated. Such atoms, must, therefore, exist for ever, and without change: they must be eternal, and immutable. These properties of matter, properties I mean attributed to it by the Epicureans, our philosophic poet discusses at ver. 581 and 604.

Sed, quæ sunt rerum primordia, nulla potest vis
Stringuere; nam solido vincunt ea corpore demum;
Et si difficile esse videtur credere quidquam
In rebus solido reperiri corpore posse:
Transit enim fulmen cœli per sæpta domorum,
Clamor ut, ac voces: ferrum candescit in igni;
Dissiliuntque fere ferventi saxa vapore:

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I have often been amused at the disputes in which men of extensive learning and profound speculation have engaged on the subject of *matter*; but more especially at beholding them, in the prosecution of their inquiries, arrive at a conclusion the very converse of that for which they at first contended. Dr. Priestley was denominated a *materialist*, and he thus acknowledged himself; and, in effect, fought more battles under the standard of materialism than any other champion in Christendom. Every thing with him was matter in the Universe that was not space: there was no tertium quid, or third and different substance: consequently, the soul of man is *material*. But what is matter, or rather what is its definition? If I recollect aright, these are the Doctor's words: "Matter is a solid and extended substance, endowed with powers of attraction and repulsion."—With this definition, he enters into a controversy with his friend Dr. Price; and, nugatory as was its termination, the world is much indebted to these celebrated men for the controversy thus commenced. Can matter think? is the grand question proposed by the latter; a substance naturally inert, and which is only moved by collision or other violence? Matter, observes Dr. Priestley, in his reply to this question, may think, for matter is not inert; it is not impenetrable: it is not, logically speaking, solid. No bodies, at any time, come into immediate contact with each other, or influence each other by means of simple solidity. The earth is affected by the sun; the moon by the earth; the waters of the earth by the moon. Light is reflected from substances to which it directs its course, at a distance, and without impinging upon them. The particles of all bodies deemed the most solid and impermeable are, at any time, made to approach nearer, or recede farther from each other, by the application of different degrees of heat or cold. We can form no conception, therefore, of the beginning of perfect solidity; and it is not an improbable conjecture, that all the elementary matter employed in the formation of the solar system, might be comprized in the capacity of a nut-shell. It is, indeed, most probable, that there is no such thing as solidity in nature; and that matter, consistently with the theory of Boscovich, is nothing more than a compages of *centers of various attractions and repulsions* extending indefinitely in all possible directions.—Hence then it was replied, the only powers or properties of matter are attraction and repulsion. But powers must be the powers of something: yet if matter have nothing but these powers, and be nothing but these powers,—then is it a non-entity, or rather becomes altogether *immaterial*.—Towards the termination, therefore, of this literary contest, it seems to have been agreed, that materialism and immaterialism were the same thing: and on the part of Dr. Priestley, that, provided there were but one substance admitted in the formation of man, and the creation of the Universe, he was totally unconcerned about the term; and was equally ready to denominate it a *material*, or an *immaterial* substance.

Our modern Idealists, whether of the school of

And part combin'd and blending: these alone
Pervious and rare; while those so solid form'd
No force create can sever, or dissolve.
Nor deem such solids doubtful: though so deem'd
By sages oft, who plausibly object
That sound, that thunder, that the voice itself
Breaks thro' domestic walls: that rigid steel
Admits the blaze, and whitens: vitreous rocks

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Berkley or Hume, seem to have been influenced by a similar train of reasoning, and probably the scepticism of the Pyrrhonic school was founded upon the discrepant and incongruous maxims of Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, respecting the corpuscles of matter; the first contending that they are infinitely divisible, and of course terminate at last in absolute nullity; and the other two, that, intrinsically, they are destitute of quantity, quality, extent, or figure, and consequently that they are equally null and non-existent. The Sceptics, therefore, like the Idealists, thought it necessary to prove the existence of an external world, but, like the latter, they failed, and of course doubted of every thing. The lesson we should hence deduce is, that it is impossible to philosophise without a basis of first principles; that the utmost circumspection is necessary in the choice we make of them; and that, when once adopted, they should, on no account, be departed from.

Ver. 536. —*bodies, in their frame consist,*
*Part, of primordial atoms uncombin'd,*
*And part combin'd and blending, &c.*]

Compare this with the doctrine of Sir Isaac Newton; and it must be confest that even this philosopher has been more indebted to the school of Epicurus, than is generally conceived. I will quote his own words: "All things considered, it seems probable, that God, in the beginning, formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, moveable particles; of such sizes, figures, and with such other properties, and in such proportion to space, as most conduced to the end for which he formed them. And that these primitive particles, being solid, are incomparably harder than any *porous body compounded of them:* even so very hard as never to wear and break in pieces; no ordinary power being able to divide what God himself made one in the first creation."

Sir Isaac Newton found these opinions indeed, but he built upon them, and a most noble superstructure has he raised. To him are we indebted for the doctrines of attraction and repulsion, and the laws which govern and regulate the Universe. Matter with him, though primitively consisting of solid impenetrable particles, is not eternal, though apparently indissoluble: it is a created substance, and speaks and proves the existence of an immaterial and intelligent author.

Des Cartes, however, as he differed from our unrivalled countryman in his doctrine of a vacuum, differed likewise from him in almost every other idea respecting matter itself, excepting indeed as to its creation by the Deity. According to Des Cartes, therefore, matter was possessed of no such primitive particles as those imagined by Newton and the Epicureans; under every modification it was totally unsolid and infinitely divisible: a doctrine which occupies the whole of the fourth book of the Cartesian Anti-Lucretius.

Conlabefactatus rigor auri solvitur æstu
Tum glacies æris, flammâ devicta, liquescit:
Permanat calor argentum, penetraleque frigus;
Quando utrumque manu, retinentes pocula rite,
Sensimus, infuso lympharum rore superne:
Usque adeo in rebus solidi nihil esse videtur.
Sed quia vera tamen ratio, naturaque rerum,
Cogit, ades, paucis dum versibus expediamus,
Esse ea, quæ solido atque æterno corpore constent;
Semina quæ rerum, primordiaque, esse docemus:
Unde omnis rerum nunc constet summa creata.

Principio, quoniam duplex natura duarum
Dissimilis rerum longe constare reperta est,
Corporis, atque loci, res in quo quæque geruntur;
Esse utramque sibi per se, puramque, necesse est.
Nam, quâquomque vacat spatium, quod inane vocamus,
Corpus eâ non est: quâ porro quomque tenet se
Corpus, eâ vacuum nequaquam constat inane.
Sunt igitur solida, ac sine inani, corpora prima.
Præterea, quoniam genitis in rebus inane est,
Materiem circum solidam constare necesse est:
Nec res ulla potest verâ ratione probari
Corpore inane suo celare, atque intus habere,

Melt in the fierce volcano: gold and brass
Forego their icy hardness, and alike
Yield in the fiery conflict, and dissolve:
That e'en the silver chalice, fill'd with lymph
Fervid or cold, unlocks its secret pores,
And warms, at once, or chills th' embracing hand.
Hence deem they matter pervious all, and void
Of solid substance. But attend, benign,
And, since right reason, and the frame of things
Demand the verse, the muse shall briefly prove
The seeds, the principles of matter all
Both solid, and eternal, whence alone
Springs the stupendous fabric of the world.
Of SPACE, of MATTER, as already sung,
Th' ENTIRE of things consists, by nature form'd
Distinct and adverse; and existing pure
Each uncontrol'd of each. Where matter dwells
Void space can ne'er be found, nor matter found,
Search where thou wilt, where space resides and reigns.
As space is vacant then, material seeds
Must solid prove, perforce, and free from void.
Thus, too, as vacuum dwells in all produc'd,
Some solid substance must that vacuum bound:
Nor aught of vacuum can created things
Be prov'd t' enclose, if solids not exist,

Si non, quod cohibet, solidum constare relinquas.
Id porro nihil esse potest, nisi materiaï
Concilium, quod inane queat tectum cohibere.
Materies igitur, solido quæ corpore constat,
Esse æterna potest, quom cætera dissoluantur.
Tum porro, si nihil esset, quod inane vacaret,
Omne foret solidum: nisi, contra, corpora certa
Essent, quæ loca conplerent, quæquomque tenerent;
Omne, quod est, spatium, vacuum constaret inane.
Alternis igitur nimirum corpus inani
Distinctum; quoniem nec plenum gnaviter exstat,
Nec porro vacuum: sunt ergo corpora certa,
Quæ spatium pleno possint distinguere inane.
Hæc neque dissolvi plagis, extrinsecus icta,
Possunt: nec porro, penitus penetrata, retexi;
Nec ratione queunt aliâ tentata labare:
Id, quod jam supra tibi paullo obtendimus ante.
Nam neque conlædi sine inani posse videtur
Quidquam, nec frangi, nec fundi in bina secando:
Nec capere humorem, neque item manabile frigus,
Nec penetralem ignem; quibus omnia confaciuntur.
Et, quo quæque magis cohibet res intus inane,
Tam magis hiis rebus penitus tentata labascit.
Ergo, si solida, ac sine inani, corpora prima
Sunt, ita utei docui, sint hæc æterna necesse est.

Whose power alone can such enclosures form.
But solids must be matter; the prime seeds
Of all survey'd, harmonious in their act,
And undecay'd when all decays around.

Were there no space, th' ENTIRE OF THINGS would prove
One boundless solid: and were nought conceiv'd
Of viewless seeds, close filling, void of space,
Each spot possest, all then were vacuum blank.
Thus each from each, from matter space exists
Distinct and clear: since never all is void,
Nor ever full; but this from that preserv'd
By countless atoms acting though unseen.
These, as already sung, no powers can pierce:
O'er blows external, o'er each vain attempt
Of penetrative solvents, or aught else
Philosophy reveals, triumphant still.
For nought can break, of vacuum all devoid,
Or melt, or moulder, or within admit
Vapour, or cold, or power of pungent heat,
By which dissolves this fabric of the world.
'Tis vacuum lays the base: as this exists,
Augments, or lessens, things alone decay.
What then is solid, and from vacuum free,
Must undecay'd, and still eternal live.

Præterea, nisi materies æterna fuisset,
Antehac ad nihilum penitus res quæque redissent;
De nihiloque renata forent, quæquomque videmus.
At, quoniam supra docui, nihil posse creari
De nihilo, neque, quod genitum est, ad nihil revocari;
Esse inmortali primordia corpore debent,
Dissolvi quo quæque supremo tempore possint,
Materies ut subpeditet rebus reparandis.
Sunt igitur solidâ primordia simplicitate,
Nec ratione queunt aliâ, servata per ævom,
Ex infinito jam tempore res reparare.
Denique, si nullam finem natura parasset
Frangundis rebus, jam corpora materiaï
Usque redacta forent, ævo frangente priore,
Ut nihil ex illis a certo tempore posset,
Conceptum, summum ætatis pervadere finem;
Nam quid vis citius dissolvi posse videmus,
Quam rursus refici: quapropter longa diei
Infinita ætas ante acti temporis omnis,

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Ver. 599. *Seeds there must be of ever-during date*
*To which, perpetual, all dissolves, or whence*
*Flows the fresh pabulum that all repairs.*

Akenside, in his Pleasures of Imagination, has been frequently and largely indebted to our poet for many of his most beautiful and sublime passages, although I do not recollect that any critic has hitherto pointed out such obligations. In the note on ver. 1014, the reader will find an express translation; and in that on ver. 1093, a most striking parallelism. The following verses have a strong reference to the system of Epicurus, and probably an allusion to the verses which have introduced this note.

——trace the forms
Of *atoms* moving with incessant change
Their *elemental* round; behold the *seeds*
Of being, and the energy of life
Kindling the mass with ever-active flame. Book I.

Were matter not eternal, ages since
All had return'd to nothing whence it sprang,
And from that nothing all again reviv'd.
But since from nothing nought can ever rise,
As prov'd above, nor aught to nothing shrink,
Seeds there must be of ever-during date,
To which, perpetual, things dissolve, or whence
Flows the fresh pabulum that all repairs.
But seeds thus simple must be solid too;
Else unpreserv'd through countless ages past,
And useless to recruit th' exhausted world.
Else friction, too, had injur'd: each by each
Through myriad years abraded, and reduc'd,
'Till nought conceptible had liv'd to rear,
Each in its time, the progenies of earth:
For all is wasted easier than renew'd.
And hence, had all been thus disturb'd, dissolv'd,
And fritter'd through the long anterior lapse
Of countless ages, future time in vain

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Ver. 605. *Else friction too had injur'd:*—] It is the precise doctrine of our own accurate and comprehensive philosopher. These are Newton's words on the subject: "While the primitive and solid particles of matter continue entire, they may compose bodies of one and the same nature and texture in all ages: but should they wear away, or break in pieces, the nature of things, depending on them, would be changed. Water and earth composed of old worn particles, and fragments of particles, would not be of the same nature and texture now, with water and earth composed of entire particles at the beginning. And therefore that nature may be lasting, the changes of corporeal things are to be placed only in the various separations, and new associations, and motions of these permanent particles: compound bodies being apt to break, not in the midst of solid particles, but where those particles are laid together, and touch in a few points."

Quod fregisset adhuc, disturbans dissoluensque,
Numquam id reliqüo reparari tempore posset :
At nunc nimirum frangundi reddita finis
Certa manet, quoniam refici rem quamque videmus,
Et finita simul generatim tempora rebus
Stare, quibus possint ævi contingere florem.
Huc adcedit, utei solidissima materiaï
Corpora quom constant, possint tamen omnia reddi
Mollia, quæ fiunt : aër, aqua, terra, vapores,
Quo pacto fiant, et quâ vi quomque gerantur :
Admixtum quoniam semel est in rebus inane.
At contra, si mollia sint primordia rerum,
Unde queant validei silices ferrumque creari,
Non poterit ratio reddi : nam funditus omnis
Principio fundamenti natura carebit.
Sunt igitur solidâ pollentia simplicitate ;
Quorum condenso magis omnia conciliatu
Artari possunt, validasque obtendere vireis.
Denique, jam, quoniam generatim reddita finis
Crescendis rebus constat, vitamque tenendi ;
Et quid quæque queant, per fœdera naturaï,
Quid porro nequeant, sancitum quandoquidem exstat ;
Nec commutatur quidquam ; quin omnia constant
Usque adeo, variæ volucres ut, in ordine cunctæ,
Obtendant maculas generaleis corpore inesse ;

Would strive the ruin'd fragments to repair.
But what more obvious than that bounds exist
To matter decompounding, primal seeds
To forms defin'd coercing; since again
All springs to birth, harmonious, kinds from kinds,
True to their times, and perfect in their powers?
Yet, though the principles of matter thus
Prove firm and solid, its component forms,
As air, earth, vapour, or translucent stream,
May still be soft and pliant, as combin'd,
E'en from their birth, with less, or larger void.
But had those principles themselves been rear'd
Pliant and soft, then whence the sturdy steel,
The close-compacted flint, or aught besides,
Of equal texture, trac'd through Nature's realm?
Thus simple solids must be still confest;
And all be soft, or rigid, as of these
In more or less concentrate mode compos'd.
To all has nature giv'n a bound precise
Of being and perfection; and promulg'd,
To ev'ry varying rank, her varying laws;
Urging to this, from that restraining firm.
Nought suffers change: the feathery tribes of heaven,
Bear, on their glossy plumes, through ev'ry class,
The same fixt hues that first those classes stamp'd.

Inmutabile materiæ quoque corpus habere
Debent nimirum: nam, si primordia rerum
Conmutari aliquâ possent ratione revicta,
Incertum quoque jam constet, quid possit oriri,
Quid nequeat; finita potestas denique quoique
Quâ nam sit ratione, atque alte terminus hærens;
Nec totiens possent generatim secla referre
Naturam, motus, victum, moresque, parentum.

Tum porro, quoniam est extremum quoique cacumen
Corporis illius, quod nostri cernere sensus
Jam nequeunt; id nimirum sine partibus exstat,
Et minumâ constat naturâ: nec fuit umquam
Per se secretum, neque posthac esse valebit;
Alterius quoniam est ipsum pars primaque, et ima:
Inde aliæ, atque aliæ, similes ex ordine partes
Agmine condenso naturam corporis explent.
Quæ, quoniam per se nequeunt constare, necesse est
Hærere; unde queant nullâ ratione revelli.

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Ver. 638. *Hence matter too, through all its primal seeds, Is prov'd immutable:*——] The doctrine of the eternity and immutability of primitive atoms, according to the system before us, flows from their simple solidity. Immutable indeed, and indissoluble Sir Isaac Newton conceived them to be, as appears in the note immediately foregoing. The only difference between his opinion on this subject, and that of our poet is, that the former imagined them to have been created by the Divinity, and consequently denied their eternity.

Ver. 646. *To each pursuit, each action of their sires.*]
Hence, perhaps, Horace,

Hence matter too, through all its primal seeds,
Is prov'd immutable: for, if o'ercome
By aught of foreign force, those seeds could change,
All would be doubtful; nor the mind conceive
What might exist, or what might never live:
Nor why, decide, such variance in their powers,
And final terms of life, or instinct strong,
Through every age, still urging every race
To each pursuit, each action of their sires.
Know, too, each seed, each substance is compos'd
Of points extreme no sense can e'er detect:
Points that, perforce, minutest of themselves,
To parts can ne'er divide: not self-educ'd,
Nor, but as form'd, existing, else destroy'd.
Parts such can hold not: each the first, pure part,
Itself, of other substance: which, when join'd
Alone by kindred parts, in order due,
Forms, from such junction, the prime seeds of things.
But e'en such parts, though by the mind as parts
Conceiv'd, disjoin'd can ne'er exist; and thence
Adhere by firm, indissoluble bond.

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Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis:
Est in juvencis, est in equis patrum
Virtus: nec imbellem feroces
Progenerant aquilæ columbam. Od. iv. 4.

From brave and good the good man springs;
The horse, the heifer show their breed:
Nor can the dove, with timid wings,
Rise from the ravenous eagle's seed.

Ver. 647. *Know, too, each seed, each substance is compos'd*] See on this subject the note on ver. 535 of the present book.

Sunt igitur solidâ primordia simplicitate,
Quæ minumis stipata cohærent partibus arte;
Non ex illorum conventu conciliata,
Sed magis æternâ pollentia simplicitate:
Unde neque avelli quidquam, nec diminui jam,
Concedit natura, reservans semina rebus.

Præterea, nisi erit minumum, parvissima quæque
Corpora constabunt ex partibus infinitis:
Quippe, ubi dimidiæ partis pars semper habebit
Dimidiam partem; nec res præfiniet ulla.
Ergo rerum inter summam, minumamque, quid escit?
Nihil erit, ut distet: nam, quam vis funditus omnis
Summa sit infinita, tamen, parvissima quæ sunt,
Ex infinitis constabunt partibus æque.
Quod, quoniam ratio reclamat vera, negatque
Credere posse animum, victus fateare necesse est,
Esse ea, quæ nullis jam prædita partibus exstent,
Et minumâ constent naturâ: quæ quoniam sunt,
Illa quoque esse tibi solida, atque æterna fatendum.
Denique, ni minumas in parteis cuncta resolvi
Cogere consuesset rerum natura creatrix,
Jam nihil ex illis eadem reparare valeret:
Propterea, quia, quæ nullis sunt partibus aucta,
Non possunt ea quæ debet genitalis habere

Thus seeds are simple solids, form'd compact
Of points extreme, that never can recede:
Not lab'ring jointly to produce some end,
But potent from simplicity alone,
And hence eternal: equally unprone
To waste or sever; and by nature kept
To feed the suffering fabric of the world.
Did no such points exist, extreme and least,
Each smallest atom would be, then, combin'd
Of parts all infinite; for every part
Parts still would boast, dividing without end.
And, say, what difference could there, then, subsist
'Twixt large, and small? for tho' th' ENTIRE OF THINGS
Should infinite be deem'd, each smallest speck
Still parts as infinite would hold embrac'd.
But since at this the reasoning mind revolts,
Then must it own, o'erpower'd, that points exist
Least by their nature, and of parts devoid:
And solid, hence, and of eternal date.
Hence seeds arise, the last, least parts conceiv'd
Of actual being: the extremest points
To which creative nature all resolves.
Which, if not least, if still of parts possest,
Could ne'er, with close exactitude, renew
The universal frame: all, all would rise

Materies, varios connexus, pondera, plagas,
Concursus, motus, per quos res quæque geruntur.
Porro, si nulla est frangundis reddita finis
Corporibus, tamen ex æterno tempore quæque
Nunc etiam superare necesse est corpora rebus,
Quæ non dum clueant ullo tentata periclo.
At, quoniam fragili naturâ prædita constant,
Discrepat, æternum tempus potuisse manere
Innumerabilibus plagis vexata per ævom.
Quapropter, quei materiem rerum esse putarunt

Ver. 686. *Yet should we grant*—] The verse in the original corresponding to this, together with the six subsequent, are removed by Mr. Wakefield to a prior station, occupying in the Latin from ver. 578 to 585, and corresponding with the present version from ver. 631 to 638. For this alteration he has the authority of several very respectable copies: but as the superior weight of authority seems, nevertheless, to be in favour of the common editions, and no advantage appears to result from the change, I have taken the liberty of restoring the passage to its accustomed position.

Ver. 693. *Hence those who deem, &c.*] The existence of elements, and their number, if they exist at all, have been disputed in all ages; and even the present state of chemistry is unable to determine the question. Among the Moderns, therefore, as among the Ancients, sometimes fire, sometimes air, sometimes earth, and sometimes water, has been considered as the sole element, or primary source of all things. Sometimes two, moreover, of the substances commonly denominated elements, sometimes three, but generally, at least, till of late years, the whole four have been regarded as equally entitled to the appellation, and as equally simple and uncompounded: to which a fifth and even a sixth have been incidentally added, namely cold and oil, both of them having at times been conceived of as simple and substantial elements. To these various opinions I shall have occasion to revert in the progress of this commentary: but at present our only concern is with fire.

Fire, in all probability, from its being the grand agent in nature, and from the wonderful superiority of its effects over the known properties of every other element, was regarded amongst most nations, in an early period of the world, either as the creator and origin of all things, or, at least, the substance whence the Creator produced all things. Hence the Persians, Ethiopians, Scythians and Carthaginians in the Old World, and the Mexicans and Peruvians in the New, paid divine honours to fire itself, or to the sun, which was esteemed the sublimest representation of this element; on the origin of which worship see note on b. ii. 1167. Zoroaster ordained the erection of Pyrea, or temples dedicated to fire, through all Persia. And even the Hebrews imagined fire to be the grandest proof of the presence of the Deity. Under this symbol he appeared to Moses on mount Horeb; and to the Hebrews at large on mount Sinai, on the promulgation of the sacred law: and under this symbol he evinced his protecting presence every night, by assuming the form of a fiery pillar. And, impressed with this idea, they were ever anxious

Of weight diverse, and ever-varying form,
Casual in tie, in motion undefin'd.
Yet should we grant that matter, without end,
For ever wastes; e'en then, from earliest time,
Some matter must have triumph'd undecay'd,
Cohering still: but what can thus cohere,
What brave th' unnumber'd repercussions felt
Through ages now evolv'd, can ne'er decay:
Alike the future conqu'ring as the past.
Hence those who deem the fabric of the world

---

to preserve it in a pure and active flame upon the national altar. When, therefore, the Jews were borne away in captivity to Persia, the priests took the sacred fire of the altar and concealed it in a dry cave, with which none but themselves were acquainted; and where, on their restoration to liberty, the posterity of those priests found it on their return to Judæa. (Maccab. 2. 1. 18.) Fire was regarded with an equal degree of veneration throughout Greece and Rome. Temples in every city were erected to the goddess Vesta—a name importing fire, whether derived from the Grecian ἑστια, or the Hebrew אשתא, and in every temple a lambent flame was perpetually burning over the altar. And even so late as in the third century of the Christian era, when Heliogabalus anticipated his own apotheosis, and instituted the worship of himself over all the Roman empire, having erected a magnificent temple to his own divinity, he supplied its altar with sacred fire from the temple of Vesta, which he plundered for this purpose.

We cannot be much surprized, therefore, that a belief so common among the people, should become a frequent doctrine among the philosophers—and that all things should be supposed to originate from fire as an *element*, instead of from fire as a *god*. Such was the opinion of Heraclitus, who rendered himself more celebrated than any other sage of the Pyrean school, by the eloquent, but obscure and dogmatic manner with which he wrote upon this subject. In modern times, the same tenet has been frequently started afresh; and if not pressed to the full extent to which it was carried by Heraclitus, exhibiting such intimate marks of analogy and association as perpetually to remind us of the Heraclitæan system. Buffon supposed the whole earth to have been at first a complete body of liquid fire; and to have consisted of a comet, and a portion of the sun's exterior limb carried off by such comet, in consequence of its having given the sun an oblique stroke in the course of its orbit. At its first origin, therefore, the earth, upon this system, was nothing more than a large vitreous mass in a state of fusion. This state of fusion constituted the chaos of which every nation has some tradition: and from the chaotic mass, as it became gradually cool, the earth in its present state was progressively developed. He conceived this operation to have been the work of a multitude of ages, and endeavoured to reconcile the chronology of Moses with that of the Pundits of Hindustan, by conjecturing that while the former only begins his date from the period when the earth first became habitable, the latter calculate from the earliest origin of the globe in its state of liquid heat. To detail the arguments which have been adduced in opposition to this and similar systems, would

Ignem, atque ex igni summam consistere solo,
Magno opere a verâ labsi ratione videntur.
Heraclitus init quorum dux prælia primus,
Clarus ob obscuram linguam magis inter inaneis,
Quamde graveis inter, Graios, quei vera requirunt.
Omnia enim stolidei magis admirantur, amantque,
Inversis quæ sub verbis latitantia cernunt ;

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engross too much time, as well as paper. I refer the reader, therefore, to the works of Woodward, Whitehurst, Howard, and Kirwan.

Dr. Hutton published a theory of the earth about fourteen years ago, in the Edinburgh Philosophical Transactions, in which, after contending for the existence of an immense subterraneous fire in its center, he endeavours to prove that every substance in contact, or nearly in contact with this fiery mass, is fused by its operation ; and when fused, raised by the violence of its heat above the level of the sea : that all the continents we have discovered, and the most solid strata of which they consist, have been thus formed : that new continents are perpetually rearing in the same manner, from the wasting particles of those at present existing ; and that these new ones will ascend, and appear hereafter, when those now existing shall have been entirely frittered away. This theory, which is in no small degree confused and inconsistent, has been attacked with ability and spirit by M. De Luc and Mr. Kirwan, who attribute all the phænomena of nature to aqueous solution, a theory more minutely adverted to in various notes in book v., where our poet gives his own system of cosmology.

M. de Mairan has attempted to prove that the earth is infinitely more indebted, for the heat it receives, to its own central fires than to the rays of the sun. He allows that this latter, by adding some portion of heat to the surface of the earth, is the immediate cause of the vicissitude of the seasons ; but asserts, that were it not for the continual ascent of an immense quantity of subterranean heat, though the sun were perpetually to illuminate two thirds of the globe at once with a heat equal to that at the equator, the entire orb would soon condense into one general mass of solid ice. His reasonings on this subject are too long and intricate for insertion. There is, however, much ingenuity in them, and they are to be found in the Hist. de l'Acad. des Sciences, l'ann. 1765. See also note on b. v. ver. 425. It is probably from this theory that Klopstock has drawn his beautiful machinery of an interior world in the earth's center, in which reside the guardian spirits of the globe, and the souls of departed saints ; it is a paradise where celestial breezes blow, eternal splendour smiles, and the Almighty communicates, in an especial manner, the wonders of his providence and grace to the beatified inhabitants. Here a sun, that never sets or rises, shines with pure and uninterrupted radiance, from the beams of which the surface of the earth itself is perpetually nourished and rendered fertile.

——— Von ihr fliesst leben und wärme
In die adern der erd' empor. Die oberste sonne
Bildet mit dieser vertrauten gehülfinn den blumigen frühling,
Und den feurigen sommer, von sinkenden halme belastet,
Und den herbst anf traubengebirgen. In ihren bezirken
Ist sie niemals anf, und niemals untergegangen.
Messias, Ges. i.

Educ'd from FIRE, itself the source of all,
Far wander from the truth. Thus deem'd the sage,
Chief of his sect, and fearless in the fight,
Fam'd HERACLITUS; by the learn'd esteem'd
Of doubtful phrase, mysterious; but rever'd
By crouds of GRECIANS, flimsy, and untaught.
For such th' obscure applaud; delighted most
With systems dark, and most believing true

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From him through all the veins of upper earth
Life flows, and heat. The sun above by him,
His fixt associate, aided, decked with flowers
Rears the young spring, the fiery summer rears,
Loaded with fruits, and autumn's vine-clad realm.
The bright horizon he for ever gilds,
Nor sets, nor rises.

Ver. 697. *Fam'd* HERACLITUS; *by the learn'd esteem'd Of doubtful phrase, mysterious*;—] That Heraclitus, in common with some other philosophers, conceived all things to have originated from fire, we learn from the following assertion of Plutarch. Plac. Phil. i. 3. Ἡρακλειτος και Ἱππασος ὁ Μεταποντινος αρχην των ὁλων το πυρ. εκ πυρος γαρ τα παντα γινεσθαι, και εις πυρ παντα τελευταν, λεγουσι. "Heraclitus, and Hippasus of Metapontus, maintained that the principle of all things was fire: that from fire every thing proceeded, and to it would finally return." And that his writings were obscure and difficult to be understood, as likewise that he purposely aimed at such abstruseness of style, we are informed by Cicero, de Fin. lib. 2. De industria, says he, et consulto, occulte dixit. On this account he was generally denominated σκοτεινος, obscure. And Menage informs us, that he affected this obscurity of diction in imitation of nature herself; ad Laert. vit. Heracl. φυσις γαρ κατ' Ἡρακλειτον κρυπτεσθαι φιλει.

Ver. 700. *For such th' obscure applaud; delighted most With systems dark, &c.*] To the same effect, Beattie, in his inimitable Minstrel:

And much they grope for truth, but never hit,
Still deeming darkness light, and their vain blunders wit. i. 51.

So, Thomson:

The fond, sequacious herd, to mystic faith,
And blind amazement prone. SUMMER.

Hence the propriety of the advice given by Vida,

Verborum *in primis* tenebros fuge, nubilaque atra;
Nam neque (si tantum fas credere) defuit olim,
Qui lumen jucundum ultro, lucemque perosus,
Obscuro nebulæ se circumfudit amictu:
Tantus amor noctis, latebræ tam dira cupido.
POETIC. iii. 15.

*In chief*, avoid obscurity, nor shroud
Your thoughts and dark conceptions in a cloud;
For some we know affect to lose the light
Lost in forc'd figures, and involv'd in night;
Studious and bent to shun the common way,
They skulk in darkness, and abhor the day. PITT.

Ver. 701. ——*and most believing true*
*The silver sounds that charm th' enchanted ear.*] D'Avenant has imitated this verse of Lucretius, or has otherwise exhibited a singular parallelism both of idea and verbiage, in his description of the school men:

With terms they charm the weak, and pose the wise

Veraque constituunt, quæ belle tangere possunt
Aureis, et lepido quæ sunt fucata sonore.
Nam, quur tam variæ res possent esse, requiro,
Ex uno si sunt igni, puroque, creatæ.
Nihil prodesset enim calidum denserier ignem,
Nec rarefieri, si partes ignis eamdem
Naturam, quam totus habet super ignis, haberent.
Acrior ardor enim conductis partibus esset:
Languidior porro disjectis, disque supatis.
Amplius hoc fieri nihil est quod posse rearis
Talibus in caussis; ne dum variantia rerum
Tanta queat densis, rarisque, ex ignibus esse.
Id quoque, si faciant admixtum rebus inane,
Denseri poterunt ignes, rarique relinqui:
Sed, quia multa sibi cernunt contraria inesse,

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The birth-place of Heraclitus was Ephesus. He flourished in the reign of the last Darius, about the 69th Olympiad, and in the 5th century before the commencement of the Christian era. He is reported to have been much addicted to the study of philosophy, and frequently to have wept over the miseries and follies of mankind. He composed several philosophic treatises, of which that on Nature was the most esteemed, though, like his other works, it was laboured with much intentional obscurity of style. Of this essay Euripides sent a copy to Socrates, who declared, with great liberality of mind, that what he could comprehend of it was excellent, and he doubted not that the rest, which he could not comprehend, was equally so. Darius, after having perused this work, invited him to the Persian court: but the philosopher preferred the quiet of retirement to the splendour of a palace, or the bustle of the busy world. He lived in total seclusion from mankind; and died in the 60th year of his age of a dropsy, said to have been produced by his subsisting upon a vegetable diet alone.

Ver. 703. *But whence, I ask, &c.*] Our poet proceeds to demonstrate, that fire could not be either the origin of things, or the only substance employed in their production. In support of this denial, he advances five arguments.—Fire is a substance uniform and homogeneous, but the phænomena of nature are various and opposite. Fire may indeed produce occasional changes in the appearance of things by rarefying some bodies more than others; but if the parts of a dense body recede, and become rare, a vacuum must, of course, exist between the parts so receding;

The silver sounds that charm th' enchanted ear.
But whence, I ask, if all from FIRE proceed
Unmix'd and simple, spring created things
So various in their natures? Urge not here
That fire condenses now, and now expands;
For if the same, divided or entire,
Its parts condens'd a heat can only prove
More fierce; and less when rarefied, and thin.
Still all is FIRE. Nor canst thou e'er conceive
From fire that aught can spring but fire itself.
Much less, in fire made dense alone, or rare,
Trace the vast variance of created things.
Dense too, and rare a vacuum must imply,
As urg'd already: yet full well convinc'd
What straits surround them if a void exist,

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yet Heraclitus, and his followers, deny a vacuum, and therefore ought to deny the possibility of rarefaction, for which they contend. If, however, it could be imagined that the particles of fire change their very nature by uniting together, when once a change of any kind has taken place, and the original nature of the substance is hereby destroyed, it must continue to change, it must persevere in wasting, till at length it perish altogether. Undoubtedly, there are substances in nature which are perfectly immutable, the essential seeds of whatever exists, and a change in the quantity or arrangement of which produces that variety which surrounds us; but it is certain that these primal seeds or substances cannot be fire, for then every thing would be fire, and there could be no variety whatever: while, to maintain such a theory, moreover, would be to oppose our system to our senses; our mental conjectures to those organs, whence all knowledge of facts and events must of necessity flow: nor is there any superior reason for a denial of the existence of other supposed elements in favour of fire, rather than for a denial of fire in favour of the existence of other supposed elements.

Ver. 705. ——*Urge not here*
*That fire condenses now, and now expands*;] Diogenes Laertius, in his life of Heraclitus, informs us of the order by which the adherents to this hypothesis imagined all things were produced from fire. Fire, says he, according to their opinion, when condensed, becomes moist, and thus is changed to air; air, by compression, becomes water: and water, when condensed, becomes earth. See note on ver. 846, where the same tenet is more minutely discussed.

Et fugitant in rebus inane relinquere purum;
Ardua dum metuunt, amittunt vera, viaï:
Nec rursum cernunt exemptum rebus inane,
Omnia denseri, fierique ex omnibus unum
Corpus, nihil ab se quod possit mittere raptim,
Æstifer ignis utei lumen jacit, atque vaporem;
Ut videas non e stipatis partibus esse.
Quod, si forte ullâ credunt ratione potesse
Igneis in cœtus stingui, mutareque corpus;
Scilicet ex nullâ facere id si parte reparcent,
Obcidet ad nihilum nimirum funditus ardor
Omnis, et ex nihilo fient quæquomque creantur.
Nam, quodquomque suis mutatum finibus exit,
Continuo hoc mors est illius, quod fuit ante:
Proinde aliquid superare necesse est incolome ollis,
Ne tibi res redeant ad nihilum funditus omnes,
De nihiloque renata virescat copia rerum.
Nunc igitur, quoniam certissima corpora quædam
Sunt, quæ conservant naturam semper eamdem,
Quorum abitu, aut aditu, mutatoque ordine, mutant
Naturam res, et convortunt corpora sese;
Scire licet, non esse hæc ignea corpora rerum.
Nihil referret enim, quædam decedere, abire,
Atque alio adtribui, mutarique ordine, quædam,
Si tamen ardoris naturam cuncta tenerent:

Such sages doubt, but, doubting, still deny:
Fearful of danger, yet averse from truth.
Such, too, reflect not that from things create,
Should void withdraw, the whole at once were dense,
One solid substance all, and unempower'd
Aught from itself t' eject, as light, and smoke
Flies from the purple flame; evincing clear
Its parts unsolid, and commixt with void.
But should it still, perchance, be urg'd, that fires
Perish by junction, and their substance change,
Then must that changing substance waste to nought;
And thus from nought th' ENTIRE of nature spring.
For what once changes, by the change alone
Subverts immediate its anterior life.
But still, victorious, something must exist,
Or all to nought would perish; and, in turn,
From nought regerminate to growth mature.
  Yet though most certain things there are exist
That never change, the seeds of all survey'd,
Whose presence, absence, or arrangement new
That ALL new models, certain 'tis, alike,
Those seeds can ne'er be FIRE. For what avails
Such absence, presence, or arrangement new
Of igneous matter, if the whole throughout
Alike be igneous? Change howe'er it may,

Ignis enim foret omnimodis, quodquomque crearet.
Verum, ut opinor, ita est: sunt quædam corpora, quorum
Concursus motus, ordo, positura, figuræ,
Ecficiunt igneis, mutatoque ordine mutant
Naturam: neque sunt igni similata, neque ullæ
Præterea rei, quæ corpora mittere possit
Sensibus, et nostros adjectu tangere tactus.
Dicere porro ignem res omneis esse, neque ullam
Rem veram in numero rerum constare, nisi ignem,
Quod facit hicc' idem, perdelirum esse videtur.
Nam contra sensus ab sensibus ipse repugnat,
Et labefactat eos, unde omnia credita pendent;
Unde hic cognitus est ipsi, quem nominat ignem.
Credit enim sensus ignem cognoscere vere;
Cætera non credit, quæ nihilo clara minus sunt:
Quod mihi quom vanum, tum delirum, esse videtur.
Quo referemus enim? quid nobis certius ipsis
Sensibus esse potest? quî vera, ac falsa, notemus?

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Ver. 743. *Ask'st thou whence fire proceeds then? &c.*] The sentiment of Lucretius respecting fire is precisely that of Boerhaave, Homberg, Crawford, and most of the modern chemists. He contends strenuously, that it is a substance sui generis, reared from a definite combination of primordial atoms, like any other simple substance. This tenet of the Epicurean philosophy is supposed to have been derived from Democritus. It was controverted by Aristotle and the Peripatetics, who maintained, that there was no such thing as elementary fire, but that heat was in every instance produced by commotion of the minute particles of the heated body. This latter tenet, together with the general philosophy of Aristotle, descended to a very late period of European learning; and formed a part of the creed of Bacon, Boyle, Des Cartes and Newton. A more accurate chemical knowledge, however, has now almost entirely banished the peripatetic doctrine from the schools of Europe, and restored to general belief the doctrine of semina ignis, or elementary fire, so forcibly contended for by our poet in this place, but described

Through every variance all must still be flame.—
Ask'st thou whence fire proceeds then? As I deem
From certain seeds to certain motions urg'd,
Or forms, or combinations; which, when chang'd,
Change too their nature; and, though yielding fire,
Not fire resembling, or aught else perceiv'd
By human sense, or tangible to touch.
To hold, moreo'er, as Heraclitus held,
That all is fire, and nought besides exists
Through nature's boundless fabric, is to rave.
T' oppose the mental sense, erroneous oft,
To sense external whence all knowledge flows;
And whence himself first trac'd that flame exists.
To sense he trusts, when sense discloses fire,
And yet distrusts in things disclos'd as clear.
Can there, in man, be conduct more absurd!—
Where shall we turn us? Where, if thus we fly
Those senses chief that sever true from false?—

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and defined more, still more minutely, in b. iii. v. 240, and following, where he proves that it is a constituent part of the matter of life. This elementary fire, or caloric of the Epicureans, extended, as it is admitted to do in the present day, through every possible substance, but only became sensible in a concrete state, or when its particles were collected together.

In the cycle of human science, however, there seems to be but few theories advanced which do not in turn yield to others, and which again are not successively restored to popular notice. Thus, notwithstanding the general inclination of the philosophers of the present day to the Epicurean doctrine of the separate existence of elementary heat, count Rumford and Mr. Davy seem to be labouring with all their ingenuity, but perhaps without intending it, to rebuild the hypothesis of Aristotle, that there is no such thing as elementary heat, upon the ruins of the atomic philosophy.

Ver. 753. —*sense external whence all knowledge flows*;] See note on ver. 471.

Præterea, quâ re quisquam magis omnia tollat,
Et velit ardoris naturam linquere solam,
Quam neget esse igneis, summam tamen esse relinquat?
Æqua videtur enim dementia dicere utrumque.
Quapropter, quei materiem rerum esse putarunt
Ignem, atque ex igni summam consistere posse;
Et quei principium gignundis aëra rebus
Constituere; aut humorem queiquomque putarunt

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Ver. 765. —*those for* AIR *who strive*] The same arguments urged against fire, as the principle of all things, will apply with equal force against every other simple and individual substance whatever. For one unigenous substance can produce but one unigenous substance, and not a diversity. Anaximenes, however, a philosopher contemporary with Alexander the Great, and who on his decease wrote his history, a work that has been long lost to the world, conceived differently. And since Heraclitus had entered the lists as champion for fire, Anaximenes threw down the gauntlet in favour of AIR; asserting, after the reasoning of the former philosopher, that all things were generated by a successive condensation and rarefaction of this element: and that the world was animated and held together by its operation, in the same manner as the body is animated and held together by the soul; which last substance he likewise conceived to be of aërial origin. Air, too, or ether, upon the same principle as fire, has had its mythologic as well as its philosophic supporters, with respect to its being the common origin of all things. Hence, Jupiter himself is generally represented by the poets under the symbol of this element: and the following language, figuratively employed by Lucretius on another occasion, is by them adopted in its literal sense:

All springs from *heaven* etherial, all that lives.
The *sire* of all is *ether*.

B. ii. 1000. NAT. OF THINGS.

Hence Cœlum or Ουρανος, in the chronology of Hesiod, is in like manner represented as the common father of all things, impregnating the earth by his embraces. Our author reverts to this opinion, and again opposes it in b. ii. 1167; to the note on which I refer the reader.

Air, according to the belief of Boerhaave, is not the origin of all things; but that in which all things are contained. It is the universal chaos or colluvies of created matters. Whatever fire can volatilize, the magnetic and electric fluid, and that which is ejected from the heavenly bodies, all, in his conception, combine in the composition of air.

In the Memoirs of the French Royal Academy, 1703, is a paper of M. Amontons, in which, after observing that air may be compressed so as to be rendered heavier than gold, platina, or any other substance we are acquainted with: after conjecturing, moreover, that the body of the earth is composed of strata of substances of different gravities, progressively taking their stations according to their gradation of weight, he asserts, that the centre of the earth, containing a sphere of 6451,538 fathoms diameter, is composed of air, thus compressed to a density greater than that of any known substance besides: and from such elastic air, expanded by the heat of subterraneous fires, he deduces all the earthquakes that have ever agitated the globe.

Although it does not appear, then, that all things, in the opinion of M. Amontons, originated from air, yet by far the greater part is air, and nothing else.

Why, rather, too, should all that else exists
Be thus denied, and fire alone maintain'd,
Than fire denied, and all maintain'd besides?
Tenets alike preposterous and wild.
Hence those, in FIRE, who trace the rise of things,
And nought but FIRE; or those for AIR who strive
As source of all; or those the dimpling STREAM
Who fondly fancy; or the pond'rous EARTH,

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The system, however, most consentaneous with this of Anaximenes, of any I have met with in modern times, is that of M. Humboldt, a German chemist, of no mean reputation, as detailed in a treatise published in 1801, entitled "Versuche über die Chemische Zerlegung des Luftkreises." In this publication, the author supposes the solid parts of the earth to have been precipitated from a kind of gross and feculent atmosphere during the existence of a chaos. This idea is, indeed, fanciful; but the author's chemical facts and experiments are entitled to serious attention; and particularly those which relate to the quantity of carbon contained in common atmospheric air, here calculated at three-twentieths of the whole, and which seem to support the doctrine of the oxygeneity of light.

Ver. 766. ——*those the dimpling* STREAM

*Who fondly fancy;*] Such was the opinion of many philosophers, but particularly of Thales of Miletus, the contemporary and intimate friend of Solon, and who consequently flourished about five centuries before the commencement of the Christian era. He was the founder of the Ionic school, and the first who attempted to calculate eclipses. His hypothesis of the origin of all things from water, has been adopted by some men of letters in every age, but particularly among the earlier of the German chemists, as Paracelsus, and Van Helmont. It was the general belief among the Hebrew sages, in consequence of the Mosaic assertion, "that the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the WATERS," (the only substance intimated to exist) when engaged in the work of creation. And for the same reason it has formed a part of the creed of Basil Valentine, and many of the fathers of the Christian church in later periods. Thales, however, in all probability, drew his hypothesis from observing how very large a portion of even the hardest and most solid substances is composed of water; and from the cohesion which is produced in the driest and most subtile earths and powders of every description upon its introduction.

Mythology has also adopted the element of water as the great source and origin of all things, as well as philosophy; and the espousers of this mythologic tenet have been very numerous and plausible. It is repeatedly admitted by Homer: and is, probably, in consequence hereof, again controverted by our poet in b. ii. 1169. Allegorically, indeed, Lucretius himself, in the opening of the present book, addresses Venus as the common parent of all things: but the origin of Venus, or Dea-Mater (Δημητηρ), according to the avowed dictates of all ancient tradition, was from the main; and it is highly probable that Mr. Bryant is correct in considering her as a mere type of the ark that floated over the immense surface of water that covered the whole earth during the general deluge, and contained within its womb the radicals of all future animal and vegetable existence. See this idea enlarged upon in the note on b. ii. ver. 1167.

Fingere res ipsum per se; terramve creare
Omnia, et in rerum naturas vortier omneis;
Magno opere a vero longei deerrasse videntur.
Adde etiam, quei conduplicant primordia rerum,
Aëra jungentes igni, terramque liquori;
Et quei quatuor ex rebus posse omnia rentur,
Ex igni, terrâ, atque ānimâ, procrescere, et imbri;

Ver. 767. ——*the pond'rous* EARTH,] Pherecydes, the tutor of Pythagoras, is said to have taught the existence of three eternal beings, Jupiter, Time, and Earth; and to have believed that all material existences were derived from the last. Hesiod, however, conceived Earth to be the only eternal substance and element, and that Jupiter himself, as well as all the other gods, and the whole family of mortals, were produced by Earth, and out of its own primitive substance. Barnardin, Telesius, and some other philŏsophers of later periods, have indulged conjectures not very dissimilar. Employing the term generally as a whole, and not singly as an element, our poet himself regards the earth as the source of all being, animate and inanimate: thus a few lines further, he asserts,

Maternal, hence, is earth most justly named:

and the same observation is repeatedly made in b. v. where the doctrine of cosmology is discussed at full length. But in none of these instances does he regard the earth as a separate element; consequently, he deviates essentially from those writers, whether philosophers or mythologists, who contend for such an element, and trace the origin of all things from this individual element alone. It was from earth, as an element of this kind, that the Titans or giants of ancient tradition were conceived to have arisen. Thus Herodotus, μυθολογουνται δ' οι Γιγαντες Γηγενεις γεγονεναι, δια την υπερβολην του κατα το σωμα μεγεθους. "They asserted in their fables, that the giants were produced from the earth, on account of the excessive dimensions of their bodies." And it is obvious that the terms, Γιγας and Γηγενης, Giant and Earth-born, are nearly equivalent; the former having probably originated from the latter. In consequence of this prodigious size, they were compared to mountains or elevations, on which the sun first threw his earliest beams; and the term Titans, by which they were denominated, has no other meaning. Hence Mr. Allwood contends, but I think unwarrantably, that the Titans were mere temples or mountains dedicated to the sun, and never had any real existence.

Ver. 770. *Nor wanders less the sage who* AIR *with* FIRE] As the individual elements have occasionally found supporters among the Greek philosophers, so have they at times in every variety of combination. Œnopides pretended to trace the rise of all things from an union of air and fire; Xenophanes, from an union of earth and water; Parmenides, from that of earth and fire; and Hippo of Rhegium, from that of fire and water; whilst Onomacritus, and, since his era, Descartes, and his disciples, admit three out of the four vulgar elements, the former rejecting air, and the latter fire.

Whilst I am upon this subject, I ought not to pass over the theory of that learned and acute geologist, the late Mr. Whitehurst, which has again been brought forwards and improved upon by Mr. Kirwan. Mr. Whitehurst supposes the whole planetary system to have been formed at the same instant; and that the earth, as well as the rest of the planets, was originally a large undivided pulp or chaos, uniformly suspended in this fluid state. He supposes, more-

For each has arm'd its champions in its turn,
Alike wide wander from unerring truth.

Nor wanders less the sage who AIR with FIRE
Would fain commix, or limpid STREAM with EARTH;
Or those the whole who join, FIRE, ETHER, EARTH,
And pregnant SHOWERS, and thence the world deduce.

over, that the first efforts of this chaos, towards the production of order and harmony, consisted in the gradual separation of element from element, according to its comparative gravity: that air would therefore be superior in the scale of ascent, next water, and then earth. He again supposes, that this separation of element from element, was the work of a vast series of time, and that, consequently, no short period must have elapsed before the formation of animals or vegetables destined to inhabit the dry and continental parts of the earth. But as this was not necessary with respect to marine animals, he conceives these latter to have been the first race of beings produced in the order of creation: and he hence accounts for the frequency with which we meet with exuvies of such animals as also with fossil shells, and other marine relics on the highest mountains, and in a variety of places where we should not expect them. The operation of the sun and moon upon the agitated chaotic mass, by drawing the waters away from one part towards another, would allow, between every tide, a sufficient period for the upper points of land, not hurried away by the stream, to harden and resist the tide's return, or rise superior to its influx. These points or summits, which would be constantly increasing, would at length become proper habitations for man and beast, and vegetables; and to these elevations of land he gives the appellation of Primitive Islands.—This theory does not explain the origin of craggy rocks, profound vallies, and volcanic lavas. But, to account for such later phænomena, the ingenious author refers us to the universal deluge; which he conceives to have been produced by the expansive operation of a large body of subterranean fire, which, bursting the solid contents of the globe to its surface, admitted, through a vast variety of chasms, immense quantities of water from the general bed of the ocean, which, rarefied, in its turn, by the subterranean heat to which it was exposed, concurred, by its elastic force, in the production of all the diversities of height and depth, of rough and smooth, that are exhibited in the variegated face of nature. M. de Saussure appears to have entertained very similar ideas. He was, therefore, in the language of the French philosophers, a Neptunian: and it was his intention at one time to have delivered his opinions upon the primitive state of the earth, in a full and explicit manner. But, notwithstanding all his geologic knowledge, and profound investigations, the more he meditated upon this subject, the more difficult, he declared, it appeared to him, to form a decided opinion; and he died without having accomplished the object he had in view.

Ver. 772. *Or those the whole who join,* FIRE, ETHER, EARTH,

*And pregnant* SHOWERS,——] The popular dogma, that all things are constituted of four elements, is derived from Ocellus Lucanus, a philosopher who flourished in the 100th Olympiad, about nine centuries anterior to the Christian era; from whom it appears to have descended in a direct line to Pythagoras, Hippocrates, and Aristotle.—This doctrine, however, as I have already had occasion to observe, has

Quorum Agragantinus cum primis Empedocles est :
(Insula quem triquetris terrarum gessit in oris ;

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been often opposed in every age ; yet, upon the whole, it has ever been the most popular of any among men of letters, till about the middle of the last century, or rather later ; since which time, chemistry has been gradually assuming a scientific form, and with a daring, but steady eye, and an unsuspected success, has probed into the origin, not only of natural phænomena, but of nature herself. And what after all, is the result ? Is the world produced from different elements or principles, or from one and the same infinite mass of indivisible, indestructible, and homogeneous atoms ? From the system of Epicurus, corroborated by the weighty assent of Sir Isaac Newton, or from some one of the various opinions of other philosophers, who have radiated from this point in almost every possible direction ?

To begin with the element of fire, caloric, or latent heat. Were this a substance distinct from the particles of a heated body ; a something superadded to it, and not a mere re-arrangement and new modification of those particles ; the greater the degree of heat, the greater we should necessarily expect to find the gravity of such body ; and both Margraff and Lewis have brought forwards a few experiments ostensibly favourable to such a fact. These, however, are easily accounted for, upon the principle of calcination, and the absorption of carbonic acid gas ; while others, of greater accuracy and precision, have concurred in determining either that there is no difference between the weight of a body heated to redness, and what it possessed when cold, or that the body in a cold temperature exhibits rather a greater degree of gravity than when red-hot.—For further information on this subject, I refer the reader to the experiments of Mr. Whitehurst and Dr. Roebuck, as stated in the Philosophical Transactions, Vol. LXVI, part ii. What then must necessarily be the result of such experiments and observations, but that, according to the opinion of our sagacious and philosophic poet, fire is not a primary material substance, but a mere motion, or new and peculiar arrangement of primary particles themselves ?

Yet other elements have been canvassed as scrupulously as fire, and the same doctrine applies to each of them. Earth, it appears, is the production of water, and water of air : while air is, unquestionably, a compound, and perhaps a compound of compounds; for we know not, nor have any reason to believe that the gasses which form it, are any of them simple and unigenous : a few facts will be sufficient to illustrate this opinion.—It has long been suspected by philosophers, that there is not at present so much water in the world as there was formerly ; while the quantity of earth, and consequently of continents and islands, has been increasing in an inverse ratio : it has hence been conceived, that water is continually converting into earth ; and some experiments have very considerably favoured such an hypothesis. There is no water so pure and uncompounded, that it will not, if kept for three or four years, make an earthy deposit : rain water, distilled water, and snow, have all been tried for this purpose; but the same deposit, or transmutation into earth, has uniformly taken place. This phenomenon was long ago observed by Boerhaave, who declared, in consequence hereof, that there was no such thing as pure water to be obtained any where, or by any means.—The seeds of plants likewise, as the white-mustard seed, and some aquatic animals, as leeches, are known to increase in solid substance by the sustenance of water alone ; or, at least, without the intermixture of earth, properly so called. Earth, then, is the production of water, and not an original element ; and hence we reduce the four elements, commonly so called, to two alone ; to wit, water and air.

There are few persons of a liberal education, but are acquainted with some of the experiments upon water, of Mr. Cavendish, and the late M. Lavoisier. From these experiments, it should seem that water is no more a radical substance than earth ; or, at least, that it is producible from a due intermixture of inflammable and dephlogisticated airs ; or, according to the new, and more accurate nomenclature, of

Thus sung Empedocles, in honest fame
First of his sect; whom Agrigentum bore 775

oxygen and hydrogen. And, indeed, at the late aerostatic institute at Meudon, the balloons were all filled from hydrogen alone, obtained from the simple decomposition of water by means of an easy, and unexpensive process, discovered by M. Conti, for whom the truly scientific Guyton Morveau obtained the directorship of this establishment. These experiments then strike out air from the list of simple indestructible substances, as those I have just adverted to strike out earth and fire.

It is much doubted, however, by some philosophers, since water and air are convertible substances, whether water be not the radix of air, instead of air being that of water. Water, in its natural state, discovers but a small degree of elasticity; but when rarefied into vapour in an eolipile, it will exhibit all the characters of genuine air, and stream out like a blast of rapid wind. Yet air, if not a composition of water, is, as already observed, a compound of various gasses, of which, it is probable, that every gas is a compound in itself.

Boerhaave regarded cold as an element, believing it to possess an existence *sui generis*; Linnéus oil; the Chinese philosophers, and Indian bramins, the ether, or materia subtilis, which the Cartesians suppose to exist throughout the immensity of space, or, at least a substance of a similar description, and which, among Oriental philosophers, constitutes their fifth element. See note on b. i. 846. But if a rigid adherence to an apparent homogeneity of structure, a stern inflexible defiance of all the powers of chemical ingenuity to produce a decomposition, be the test and criterion of elementary bodies, the acid and natron, or soda, which constitute the basis of common salt, have a better title to such an appellation than any substance whatever; for as yet we know of no process, whether of art or nature, by which either of them can be formed, or decomposed. And yet no one doubts that these are compound bodies, although they have hitherto eluded every analytic attempt. The magnetic aura has long been considered as nothing more than a modification of the electric; but the electric itself is a compound: and Dr. Gren, professor at Halle, has written an able treatise upon this subject, which has deservedly passed through, at least, three editions; in which he clearly proves that the electric aura is a combination of light and caloric, or elementary heat; that it may be compounded and decompounded in bodies, and actually is so in the various processes of smelting, combustion, and evaporation. See his Grundriss der Natur. 8vo. printed at Halle 1797. The opinion of M. Haüy is not very different: he conceives the phænomena, both of magnetism and electricity, to be produced by the simultaneous action of two distinct fluids. See his very valuable Traité Elementaire de Physique. There are various animals endowed with organs, that seem to possess a power of secreting these auras, and perhaps there are no living animals altogether destitute of such organs: although in the torpedo, gymnotus electricus, and such domestic animals as cats and rats, this extraordinary power appears to exist in a greater degree than in others. It seems probable, moreover, that the electric fluidis secreted from a certain set of glands dispersed over the bodies of such animals, or from the brain itself. The secretion of a gas of any kind has not indeed been hitherto fairly detected; but air has been frequently found so largely combined with secreted substances, as to render it probable that the air itself has formed a part of the secretion. And if this be a fact with respect to air, it will equally apply with respect to the gasses of which air is a compound. The torpedo is endowed with organs which have a close resemblance to the voltaic pile; and if this structure be injured by the division of its nerves, the torpefying effect is lost. The galvanic and electric auras appear to be the same; at least, the difference is so minute as to elude all detection: it is almost reduced to a certainty, moreover, that this common aura constitutes the nervous fluid; and in man at least it should seem therefore to be secreted from the brain, and hence diffused over the body by the course of the nerves. In passing through different organs, how-

Quam fluitans circum magnis amfractibus æquor
Ionium glaucis adspargit virus ab undis,
Angustoque fretu rapidum, mare dividit undis
Æoliæ terrarum oras a finibus ejus.
Heic est vasta Charybdis, et heic Ætnæa minantur

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ever, it submits to a variety of changes, which proves obviously that such organs possess, of themselves, a considerable power over it. While some parts of the body abound with electricity, others are deficient in proportion to their capacity. The experiments of Buniva prove that the electricity of the blood is positive,—of the excrementitious fluids, negative; and these have been since fully confirmed by M. Vassali-Eandi. It is, perhaps, by a similar economy, that the luminous matter exhibited in a concrete state by the glow-worm and fire-fly, (lampyris Italica) is separated from their food, or the atmosphere that surrounds them. In the latter of these, it has been sufficiently ascertained by M. Carradori (See Brugnatelli's Annali di Chimica), that the phosphorescent fomes, when separated and collected, resides in the cells of the abdomen between the rings; and that the appearance and disappearance of the light, considered as voluntary, depend on the insect's power of opening and closing those cells.

If this solution be admitted, with respect to the secretion or separation of light in living animals, we may easily extend the conjecture, and account, upon a similar principle, for its separation and efflux from putrescent animal and vegetable substances, sea-water, and rotten timbers.

Upon the whole, it should seem then, consistently with the doctrine developed in the poem before us, that all things proceed from the same primary elemental seeds, or atoms, and are convertible into all things; and that the modification or arrangement of such atoms alone, produces the difference between substances and substances; or, to adopt the language of Lucretius, that

———in alternate course
Each flows from each, th' alternate form is seiz'd
Th' alternate nature through perennial time. i. 828.

And from whom did Sir Isaac Newton derive his hypothesis, but from the same school, when he asserted that it is probable God, in the beginning, formed matter in solid, massive, hard, impenetrable, and moveable particles, of such *sizes* and *figures*, and with such other properties as were best proportioned to the end they were to produce? and that the changes of corporeal things are to be placed only to the various separations, and new associations, and motions of those original and permanent particles?—See on this subject our poet's observations in ver. 980, and following.

Ver. 774. *Thus sung* Empedocles, *&c.*] Empedocles was the scholar both of Pythagoras and Anaxagoras. He was, likewise, contemporary with Euripides the poet, and of course flourished in the 84th Olympiad, about four hundred years before the Christian era. That he had imbibed the sentiments here attributed to him, in common indeed with Pythagoras, and Ocellus Lucanus, Ovid informs us in his Metamorphoses,

Quatuor æternus genitalia corpora mundus
Continet.——
For this eternal world is said of old
But four prolific principles to hold. xv. 239.

Plutarch, however, has more fully recognised him still. Εμπεδοκλες Μετονος Αγραγαντινος, τεσσερα μεν λεγει στοιχεια, πυρ, αερα, υδωρ, γην· δυω δε αρχωρας δυναμεις, φιλιαν τε και νεικος, ων η μεν εστιν εγοτικη, το δε διαιρετικον. de Plac. Phil. i. 3. "Empedocles of Agrigentum maintained, that all things are produced from the principles of fire, air, water and earth; into which they are all again eventually resolved." To these he added two other powers, Love and Discord; the former harmonizing and uniting, the latter disjoining, and repelling. Empedocles is reported

In cloud-capt Sicily. Its sinuous shores
Th' Ionian main, with hoarse, unwearied wave,
Surrounds, and sprinkles, with its briny dew:
And, from the fair Æolian fields, divides
With narrow frith that spurns th' impetuous surge. 780

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to have perished by a fall down the dreadful opening on the top of Mount Ætna, as the elder Pliny died by a fall into Vesuvius.

Ver. 776. *In cloud-capt* Sicily.] This description of Sicily is as geographically accurate, as it is poetically beautiful. The Ionian, or Mediterranean sea, by which it is principally surrounded, derives its appellation, according to Pliny, from Ionius, the son of Dyrribachius, who was slain by Hercules, and thrown into the Mediterranean, to perpetuate his memory. The frith, which the poet justly denominates narrow, is at present known by the name of the Straits of Messina. Its breadth between Italy and Sicily is not more than about half a league. The two countries, indeed, originally united, but were separated, according to Faber, about the era of the Hebrew chief Joshua, by a most violent hurricane and earthquake.

Ver. 781. *Here vast* Charybdis *raves:*] Charybdis, according to the latitude in which the term is used by Thucydides, means the entire Straits of Messina; but in a more limited and common acceptation, it is a gulf, or vortex, on the immediate coast of Sicily, now denominated Calefaro, from the continual effervescence of its waters, and directly opposite the Scigla, Scylla, or pointed rock that rises off the promontory of Cœnis on the Italian side of the strait. The impetuosity of the current between Sicily and the rock Scigla, together with the force of the whirlpool of Calefaro, has been supposed to render this passage at all times dangerous to mariners. In stormy weather, indeed, there is still no small degree of hazard; but, at other periods, the natives of either country pass and repass with little apprehension, and very few accidents. It afforded the poets of Greece and Rome, however, an inexhaustible fund of picturesque and sublime imagery; and their descriptions of this impetuous passage are often grand and terrible. Thus Homer:

Αλλ' οτ' αναβροξις θαλασσης αλμυρον υδωρ,
Πας' εντοσθε φανεσκε κυκωμενη· αμφι δε πετρη
Λειην εβεβροκει, υπενερθε δε γαια φανεσκε
Ψαμμω κυανεη· τους δε χλωρον δεος ῾ηρει.
Ημεις μεν προς την δ' ιδομεν, δεισαντες ολεθρον, &c.
Odyssey, M.

Now, all at once, tremendous scenes unfold;
Thunder'd the deeps, the smoking billows roll'd!
Tumultuous waves embroil'd the bellowing flood:
All trembling, deafen'd, and aghast we stood!
No more the vessel plough'd the dreadful wave;
Fear seiz'd the mighty, and unnerv'd the brave.
Pope.

It is worth while to compare this passage with the beginning of that quoted from Camoëns, in the note to ver. 149 of this book. Many of the lines in that extract are a close copy. The parallel passage in Virgil is more: it is a translation.

Tum procul e fluctu Trinacria cernitur Ætna:
Et gemitum ingentem pelagi, pulsataque saxa
Audimus longe, fractasque ad litora voces;
Exultantque vada, atque æstu miscentur arenæ, &c.
Æn. lib. 3.

——Mount Ætna thence we spy,
Known by the smoky flames which cloud the sky.
Far off we hear the waves, with surly sound
Invade the rocks; the rocks their groans resound:
The billows break upon the sounding strand,
And roll the rising tide, impure with sand.
Dryden.

Murmura, flammarum rursum se conligere iras,
Faucibus eruptos iterum ut vis evomat igneis,
Ad cœlumque ferat flammaï fulgura rursum.
Quæ, quom magna modis multis miranda videtur
Gentibus humanis regio, visundaque fertur,
Rebus opima bonis, multâ munita virûm vi;
Nihil tamen hoc habuisse viro præclarius in se,
Nec sanctum magis, et mirum, carumque, videtur.
Carmina quin etiam divini pectoris ejus
Vociferantur, et exponunt præclara reperta;
Ut vix humanâ videatur stirpe creatus)
Hic tamen, et, supra quos diximus, inferiores
Partibus egregie multis, multoque minores;
Quamquam, multa bene ac divinitus invenientes,
Ex adyto tamquam cordis, responsa dedere
Sanctius, et multo certâ ratione magis, quam
Pythia, quæ tripode ex Phœbi lauroque profatur;
Principiis tamen in rerum fecere ruinas,

---

Ver. 781. ——*here* Ætna *rears*
*His infant thunders,*] Of this celebrated mountain, known alike to ancients and moderns, from the dreadful effects of its volcanic eruptions, our poet treats more fully and philosophically, in his sixth book; to the notes on which passage I refer the reader for further information: observing only that Creech, in his translation of this description, has thought proper, without finding it in the original, or reflecting that Lucretius was superior to the vulgar superstitions of his time, and laboured to destroy them, to introduce the fable of the giants buried under the immense weight of the mountain, and vomiting forth their revenge in flames against the gods.

Ver. 790. ——*whose song divine,* &c.] Aristotle ascribes to Empedocles the invention of rhetoric: and the general beauty and elegance of his poem on the Nature of Things, now unfortunately, except in a few scattered fragments, lost to the world, were so considerable, that the critics of ancient times were incapable of determining whether he ought to be ranked among the number of

Here vast Charybdis raves: here Ætna rears
His infant thunders, his dread jaws unlocks,
And heav'n, and earth with fiery ruin threats.
Here many a wonder, many a scene sublime,
As on he journeys, checks the traveller's steps;
And shows, at once, a land in harvests rich,
And rich in sages of illustrious fame.
But nought so wond'rous, so illustrious nought,
So fair, so pure, so lovely, can it boast,
Empedocles, as thou! whose song divine,
By all rehears'd, so clears each mystic lore,
That scarce mankind believ'd thee born of man.
Yet e'en Empedocles, and those above
Already sung, of far inferior fame,
Though doctrines frequent from their bosoms flow'd
Like inspiration, sager and more true
Than e'er the Pythian maid, with laurels crown'd,
Spoke from the tripod at Apollo's shrine;

their poets or of their philosophers. It is thus he is described by the peripatetic chief: Ὁμερικος Εμπεδοκλης, και δεινος περι φρασιν γεγονε, μεταφορικος τε ων, και τοις αλλοις τοις περι ποιητικην επιταγμασι χρωμενος. Some few verses of this renowned sage, that have escaped the ravages of time, will be found occasionally scattered in the prosecution of this work.

Ver. 797. *Than e'er the* Pythian *maid, with laurels crown'd,*
*Spoke from the tripod at* Apollo's *shrine;*] The priestess of Apollo at Delphos was commonly denominated Pythia, from πυνθανεισθαι, to consult or advise upon a subject. She pronounced the oracle from a low stool or table supported by three feet, which was, in consequence, termed a tripod; and as the laurel was a tree consecrated to Apollo, her hair was usually braided with a bandeau of its leaves. The Delphic tripod was supported by an elegant and serpentine column, which, according to Mr. Dallaway, is even now in existence, and adorns, among other Grecian remains, the area of the Hippodrome at Constantinople.

Vide his Constant. ancient and modern

Et graviter magnei magno cecidere ibi casu:
Primum, quod motus, exempto rebus inani,
Constituunt, et res molleis rarasque relinquunt,
Aëra, solem, ignem, terras, animalia, fruges;
Nec tamen admiscent in eorum corpus inane:
Deinde, quod omnino finem non esse secandis
Corporibus faciunt, neque pausam stare fragori:
Nec prorsum in rebus minumum consistere quidquam:
Quom videamus id extremum quoiusque cacumen
Esse, quod ad sensus nostros minimum esse videtur;
Conjicere ut possis ex hoc, quod cernere non quis
Extremum quod habent, minumum consistere rebus.

Huc adcedit item, quoniam primordia rerum
Mollia constituunt, quæ nos nativa videmus
Esse, et mortali cum corpore funditus: atqui

---

Ver. 800. *And greatly wander'd in attempt so great.*] The iteration of the word *great* occurs in the original in the same manner as in the translation:

Et graviter *magni magno* cecidere ibi casu.

This playful recurrence of words forms a favourite figure with our poet, who has often enriched his verses with an indulgence in it. See note on ver. 877.

Ver. 801. *And, first, they deem'd,* &c.——] He opposes the hypothesis of the Ionic school, or the four elements, by six different arguments, each of them possessed of much elegant force and logical precision. They denied the existence of a vacuum, while they contended, that bodies might have motion, and dilate or contract in a perfect plenum: an absurdity already sufficiently commented upon in ver. 420, and following. They contended for an infinite divisibility of matter, and denied the possibility of its ever separating into ultimate and extreme atoms. They maintained, that the origin of things, instead of being impenetrably solid, are soft and pliable: the fallacy of all which has been sufficiently detected and exposed already. It cannot but be remarked, moreover, that the principles or

E'en these mistook the principles of things,
And greatly wander'd in attempt so great.
And, first, they deem'd that motion might exist
From VOID exempt: that things might still be rare,
Still soften, as earth, ether, fire, or fruits,
Or e'en the ranks of animated life,
Though VOID commix'd not with their varying frames.
Then, too, they held no final term ordain'd
To comminuting atoms: which, through time,
Still crumbled on, and never could be least.
Though from such points as sense itself surveys,
Extreme and least, conjecture we may form
Of points extreme, impalpable to sight,
Least in themselves, that never can divide.
With them, moreo'er, the seeds of things were form'd
Soft, and unsolid: but whate'er is soft,
Whate'er unsolid, as at first they spring

---

elements of things for which Empedocles contended, are substances, in their very nature, hostile and opposite to each other; and of course, whenever they meet, must reciprocally annihilate each other, or else be irregularly scattered abroad by a mutual repulsive force. If, however, things could be created from the junction of such jarring and discordant elements, why should fire, water, earth, and air, be termed principles of other substances, rather than other substances principles of these? Every thing is constantly changing into every thing, and arising from every thing: and there is no more propriety in denominating one thing an element than another. But if the elemental atoms of Nature could be separated and combined afresh; if their solidity could be once destroyed, from the change in the motion or arrangement of which, every substance takes its different form and appearance: if these could be to-day pure elemental fire, to-morrow water equally unmixed and simple, then must they long since have completely perished, and disappeared: for every substance must inevitably waste, and eventually perish, that is liable to change. And it is to the solidity of primal seeds, or atoms alone, that Nature is indebted for the unvaried regularity of her powers and phænomena.

Debeat ad nihilum jam rerum summa revorti,
De nihiloque renata vigescere copia rerum;
Quorum utrumque quid a vero jam distet, habebas.
Deinde, inimica modis multis sunt, atque venena
Ipsa, sibi inter se; quâ re, aut congressa peribunt,
Aut ita diffugient, ut tempestate coactâ,
Fulmina diffugere, atque imbreis, ventosque, videmus.

Denique, quatuor ex rebus si cuncta creantur,
Atque in eas rursum res omnia dissoluuntur:
Quî magis illa queunt rerum primordia dici,
Quam contra res illorum, retroque putari?
Alternis gignuntur enim, mutantque colorem,
Et totam inter se naturam, tempore ab omni.
Sin ita forte putas ignis terræque coire
Corpus, et aërias auras, roremque liquorum,
Nihil in concilio naturam ut mutet eorum;
Nulla tibi ex illis poterit res esse creata,
Non animans, non exanimo cum corpore, ut arbos:
Quippe suam quidque in cœtu variantis acervi
Naturam obtendet, mixtusque videbitur aër

---

Ver. 828. ——*in alternate form,*
*Each flows from each,* &c.——]

Thus Dr. Darwin, with equal elegance and accuracy:

From other substance, must perforce decay.
So all to nought would perish, and again
From nought regerminate to growth mature:
Doctrines the muse already has disprov'd.
Such seeds, too, must be foes; created each
To each adverse; and hence can never meet
But sure perdition waits: or, chance, they part,
Disperst abrupt, as, in contending storms,
Wind, rain, and thunder scatter, and are lost.
But, from such four-fold foes, could all things spring,
And, sprung, to such dissolve—why rather term
Those jarring powers the primal seeds of things
Than things of them? since, in alternate course,
Each flows from each: th' alternate form is seiz'd,
Th' alternate nature, through perennial time.
Yet could'st thou deem such powers adverse might blend,
And earth with fire, with ether lymph commix,
And still retain their natures unimpair'd;
Whilst thus retained, no living form could rise
Trac'd through creation, animate, or void,
As springs the verdant shrub, of reasoning soul.
For each its nature, through the varying mass,
Would still evince, and earth with air commix,

---

Organic forms with chemic changes strive,
Live but to die, and die but to revive;
Immortal matter braves the transient storm,
Mounts in the wreck, unchanging but in form.

7 Temp. of Nat. ii. 42.

Cum terrâ simul, et quodam cum rore, manere:
At primordia gignundis in rebus oportet
Naturam clandestinam, cæcamque, adhibere;
Emineat ne quid, quod contra pugnet, et obstet,
Quo minus esse queat proprie, quodquomque creatur.

Quin etiam repetunt a cœlo, atque ignibus ejus;
Et primum faciunt ignem se vortere in auras
Aëris: hinc imbrem gigni, terramque creari
Ex imbri; retroque a terrâ cuncta revorti,
Humorem primum, post aëra, deinde calorem:
Nec cessare hæc inter se mutare, meare
A cœlo ad terram, de terrâ ad sidera mundi:
Quod facere haud ullo debent primordia facto.
Inmutabile enim quiddam superare necesse est;

Ver. 846. ——*that fire drawn hence*

*Converts to ether*, &c.——] The order of creation, which was introduced by Heraclitus, was adhered to, with little alteration, by every other teacher of philosophy. From fire, when moist, is produced air; from condensed air, water; from water contracting and concreting, earth; from earth rarefying and diffused, water; from rarefied water, air; from air highly expanded, fire. Thus Laertius: Πυκνομενον το πυρ εξυγραινεσθαι, και αερα γινεσθαι; συνισαμενον αερα γινεσθαι 'υδωρ' πυκνομενου το υδωρ εις γην τρεπεσθαι, και ταυτην οδον επι το χατω ειναι· Παλιν δε αυτην την γην χεισθαι, εξ 'ης το ὑδωρ γινεσθαι· εκ δι ταυτου τα λοιπα 'ομοιως· αυτην δε ειναι τον ανω οδον.

This common system and opinion of the elementary philosophers was intimately known to many of the poets as well. Hence the following verses of Ovid:

——resolutaque tellus
In liquidas rorescit aquas: tenuatus in auras
Aeraque humor abit: demto quoque pondere rursus
In superos aër tenuissimus emicat ignes:
Inde retro redeunt; idemque retexitur ordo;
Ignis enim densum spissatus in aëra transit;
Hic in aquas; tellus glomerata cogitur aqua.
Metamor. xv. 246.

Earth rarefies to dew: expanded more
The subtile dew in air begins to soar;
Spreads as she flies, and weary of her name
Extenuates still, and changes into flame.
Thus having, by degrees, perfection won,
Restless, they soon untwist the web they spun:
And fire begins to lose her radiant hue,
Mixt with gross air, and air descends to dew;

In ceaseless strife,—and fire with crystal lymph.
But primal seeds, whene'er the form of things
Mutual they gender, must, perforce, assume
An unobtrusive nature, close conceal'd,
Lest aught superior rise, of power adverse,
And thus th' harmonious union be destroy'd.
Such sages, too, from heav'n, and heaven's bright fires
Maintain that all proceeds: that fire drawn hence
Converts to ether, ether into showers,
And showers benign to earth: and hence again,
That all from earth returns: first liquid dew,
Then air, and heat conclusive; changing thus,
In ceaseless revolution, changing thus
From heav'n to earth, from earth to heav'n sublime:
A change primordial seeds could ne'er sustain.

---

And dew condensing does her form forego,
And sinks a heavy lump of earth below.
DRYDEN.

The whole of which opinion appears to have been derived from the Hindus, probably through the medium of Egypt; but with this difference, and ostensible advantage on the part of the Greeks, that the Hindus instead of deriving air from fire, and water from air, derive water from fire, and fire from air. The cosmogony of the Hindus is as follows: They first suppose a Supreme Deity or Being of beings; then, that this Divinity created Eternity; that Eternity brought forth Tchiwen; Tshiwen, Tchaddy; and in this manner, that a regular succession of divinities was created, till at length, we arrive at Bruma, or Bremah, being the twelfth in the order of successive generation. Bremah was the productive principle of the soul, and created (13) the heaven, or that vast expansion between heaven and earth which makes up the fifth element, or is rather the receptacle of the other four; and seems, as already observed, to be a species of the ether of the ancients, or the materia subtilis of Des Cartes: (14) the heaven or ether begat the air: (15) the air begat the fire: (16) the fire begat the water: (17) the water begat the earth. Lettres Curieuses et Edifiantes, Tom. iv. See also Asiatic Researches, Vol. iv. Art. ii., in which the above fifth element is denominated, by Sir William Jones, *a subtle spirit*, and is said to be so styled both in the Vedas, and the works of the Sufis.

Ne res ad nihilum redigantur funditus omnes.
Nam, quodquomque suis mutatum finibus exit,
Continuo hoc mors est illius, quod fuit ante.
Quapropter, quoniam quæ paullo diximus ante,
In conmutatum veniunt, constare necesse est
Ex aliis ea, quæ nequeant convortier usquam:
Ne tibi res redeant ad nihilum funditus omnes.
Quin potius, tali naturâ prædita, quædam
Corpora constituas; ignem si forte crearint,
Posse eadem, demptis paucis, paucisque tributis,
Ordine mutato, et motu, facere aëris auram:
Sic alias aliis rebus mutarier omneis.

At manifesta palam res indicat, inquis, in auram
Aërit e terrâ res omneis crescere, alique:
Et, nisi tempestas indulget tempore fausto
Imbribus, et tabe nimborum arbusta vacillant;
Solque suâ pro parte fovet, tribuitque calorem;
Crescere non possint fruges, arbusta, animantes.
Scilicet; et, nisi nos cibus aridus, et tener humor,
Adjuvat, amisso jam corpore, vita quoque omnis
Omnibus e nervis atque ossibus exsoluatur.
Adjutamur enim dubio procul, atque alimur, nos
Certis ab rebus, certis aliæ atque aliæ res:
Nimirum, quia multimodis conmunia multis

So something still must, void of change, exist;
Or all would perish, all to nought return;
For what once changes, by the change alone
Subverts immediate its anterior life.
Since, then, as sung above, these all commute
Each into each, some seeds must still be own'd
That ne'er can change, or all to nought would waste.
Hold rather, then, such seeds exist, endow'd
With powers so curious that, as now combin'd,
If fire they form, combine them but anew,
Add, or deduct, give motion, or subtract,
And all is air; and changing thus, and chang'd
That things from things perpetual take their rise.
  Nor urge, still sceptic, that each hour displays
All life protruded from the genial EARTH:
Fed by the balmy AIR; by heaven's own FIRE
Matur'd; and sav'd from pestilence, and death
Alone by SHOWERS benignant: and that hence
Man, beast, and herbs alike exist, and thrive.
The fact we own: we own from solid food,
And crystal streams, man draws his daily breath,
Of nerve, of bone, of being else depriv'd:
But, owning, add, the compounds meet for man,
For brute, for herbage, differ in their kinds,
By different tastes discern'd: and differ thus,

Multarum rerum in rebus primordia multa
Sunt; ideo variis variæ res rebus aluntur. 815

Ver. 877. ——*differ in their kinds,*
*By different tastes discern'd: and differ thus,* &c.]

The anaphora, or playful iteration adopted in this translation is still fuller in the original:

——multimodis communia multis
Multarum rerum in rebus primordia multa
Sunt; ideo variis variæ res rebus aluntur.

Of this sportive figure Lucretius appears to have been extremely fond, and it is hence frequently to be traced in the course of his poem. Our Engliſh interpreters, however, have none of them attempted to preserve it in their versions; but it would be an injustice to the labours of Marchetti not to mention that, as usual, he has been more attentive to this characteristic mark of Lucretian versification:

Ch' essendo molti primi semi e molti
Communi in molti modi a molti corpi
Mescolati fra lor: forz' è ch' il vitto
Da varie cose varie cose prendano.

In the same manner, a few lines only above, we meet with a passage which I have endeavoured as faithfully to translate.

——in alternate course
Each flows from each, th' alternate form is seiz'd,
Th' alternate nature. Ver. 828.

Dr. Johnson, if I rightly remember, in his life of Gray, strenuously objects to the use of alliterations of every kind, as stiff, cumbersome, and mechanical. But it ſhould be recollected, that all metre is mechanism; and that even the style of all prose writers, who have acquired any degree of celebrity, and especially that of Johnson himself, is mechanism reduced to habit. The

Double, double toil and trouble,

therefore, of which, parodying upon a line of Shakespear, he accuses all poets who indulge in this species of ornament, will apply to all reputable prose writers as well; but to none more, or even perhaps so largely as to the accuser. Much true taste, however, and nice discrimination, I am ready to allow, is peculiarly requisite in the use of the anaphora; and it certainly has, occasionally, been most grossly abused in the hands of poetasters and punning epigrammatists. At the same time, all ages and all nations afford us instances of its adoption by poets the most classical and refined. In our own language it is well known to be a decoration so common in the writings of Gray, that to quote him would be altogether an act of superfluity: Mason, who was his intimate friend and copyist, and who approaches, perhaps, more nearly to the elegant and impressive simplicity of Lucretius than any other didactic poet of whom we can boast, has also introduced this ornament, as he has many other decorations of the Roman bard, and even the contour of those decorations into his English Garden with no unsparing hand. Thus in a passage where the author is proving the frequent necessity of calling in *mechanic skill* to our assistance in improving the plan we have decided upon;

And where we bid her *move*, with engine huge,
Each *ponderous trunk*, the *ponderous trunk* there *move*.
A work of difficulty, and danger tried,
Nor oft successful found. But if it fail
Thy axe must do its office. Cruel task,
Yet needful. Trust me, tho' *I bid thee* strike,
Reluctantly *I bid thee*; for my soul
Holds *dear* an *ancient* oak, nothing more *dear*,
It is an *ancient* friend. B. i. v. 328.

Thus in a similar manner, Spenser:

Glad of such *luck*, the *lucky luckless* maid
A long time with that savage people staid.

In the following passage of Milton, as well as in a vast variety of other places, we meet with an instance of both literal and verbal alliteration: and Lucretius was equally attached to each.

——So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judged and *die*,
And *dying rise*, and, *rising*, with him *raise*
His brethren *ransomed*.
Par. Lost. iii. 294.

And only thus, as form'd from various seeds,
To all things common, but in various modes 880

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The glittering poetry of Dr. Darwin affords numerous instances of the same decoration; pursued, in some cases, to excess. The following couplet, and I have no room for more, offers us an elegant and unexceptionable example:

Organic forms with chemic changes strive,
Live *but to die*, and *die but to* revive.

Temp. of Nat. ii. 48.

Perhaps no poet, however, of real talents, in our own language, has carried this figure to so blameable an excess, as Dr. Young in his Night Thoughts, where it certainly makes its appearance too frequently, and is pursued, in most instances, too far.

Let us now examine a few foreign poets of acknowledged ability, both ancient and modern, in confirmation of the taste of the poet before us. And first, the eclogues of Virgil are full of the anaphora,—full, I mean, without producing disgust. Let us take an example from his Pollio:

Pan etiam, Arcadia mecum si judice certet,
Pan etiam, Arcadia dicat se judice victum.

To this passage the judicious Vida has referred, as a proof of the beauty of the iterative figure, and its employment by poets of unrivalled reputation. These are his words, and this his own imitation of this very couplet:

Quid sequar ulterius quanta dulcedine captus
Detineant aures, vocem cum rursus eandem
Ingeminant, modo non verborum cogat egestas?
Pan etiam Arcadia neget hoc si judice præsens,
Pan, etiam Arcadia dicam te judice vanum.

Poet. iii. 142.

But now to mention farther I forbear
With what strong charms they captivate the ear;
When the same terms they happily *repeat*,
The same repeated seem more soft and sweet.
This, were Arcadia judge, if Pan withstood,
Pan's judge, Arcadia, would condemn her god.

Pitt.

Homer himself furnishes us with almost as many instances as Virgil. Let the following suffice:

Φραξαντες δορυ δουρει, βακος βακει προθελυμενων·
Ασπις αρ' ασπιδ' επειδε, κορυς κορυ, ανερα δ' ανηρ.

Il. N. 130.

This passage has been happily imitated by Statius, and without swelling the present note unnecessarily, with quotations from the poets of Greece and Rome, I will confine myself to this instance alone:

Jam clypeus clypeis, umbone repellitur umbo,
Ense minax ensis, pede pes, et cuspide cuspis.

Theb. viii.

Pope has been equally fortunate in his version of the above passage in Homer, and it will serve as a translation of either extract:

An iron scene gleams dreadful o'er the fields,
Armour in armour lock'd, and shields in shields;
Spears lean on spears, on targets targets throng,
Helm sticks to helm, and man drives man along.

In an Ode on Painting, by Frederic Staüdlin, a German poet of no small merit of the present day, the same description and figure is so precisely introduced as to require no additional translation.

Hier, wie im grausen schlachtgefild
An panzer panzer hallt,
Und helm an helm, und schild an schild,
Und dampf von leichen wallt.

An alliteration of the same kind is to be met with in the twelfth Canto of the Jerusalem Delivered:

L' onta irrita lo sdegno alla vendetta;
E la vendetta poi l' onta rinnova:
Onde sempre al ferir, sempre alla fretta
Stimol novo s' aggiunge, e cagion nova.

Alternate furies either breast inflame,
Alternate vengeance, and alternate shame;
No pause, no rest th' impatient warriors know,
But rage to rage, and blow succeeds to blow.

Hoole.

Sir John Fanshaw has introduced a beautiful alliteration into his version of the second canto of the

Atque eadem magni refert primordia sæpe
Cum quibus, et quali positurâ, contineantur;
Et quos inter se dent motus, adcipiantque.
Namque eadem cœlum, mare, terras, flumina, solem,
Constituunt; eadem fruges, arbusta, animanteis:
Verum, aliis alioque modo conmixta, moventur.
Quin etiam passim nostris in versibus ipsis
Multa elementa vides, multis conmunia verbis;
Quom tamen inter se versus, ac verba, necesse est
Confiteare, et re, et sonitu distare sonanti:
Tantum elementa queunt, permutato ordine solo!

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Lusiad of Camoëns; which, indeed, does not exist in the Portugueze, and is, therefore, entitled to the additional merit of originality. Speaking of the altar, he says:

On it the picture of that shape he plac'd,
In which the holy Spirit did alight;
The picture of the dove, so *white*, so *chaste*,
On the blest virgin's head, so *chaste*, so *white*.

Camoëns, however, was by no means inattentive to this figure, although it does not form the basis of the above translation. In the sixth canto, we meet with the following instance of it:

———eu desejo
Ha muito ja de andar terras estranhas,
Por ver mais agoas que as do Douro, e Tejo,
*Varias* gentes, e leis, e *varias* manhas.

Long have I hop'd thro' foreign climes to stray,
Where others treams than Douro wind their way;
To note what *various* shares of bliss and woe
From *various* laws, and *various* customs flow.

Mickle.

See also extract from the same poet in note on book ii. ver. 606.

But even prose writers, and public orators, have not always neglected the cultivation of this rhetorical flower. It would be easy to select instances from Demosthenes and Cicero, were it necessary. Passing these, I shall merely oberve, that St. Paul himself has adopted it, 2 Cor. ix. 8. ινα εν παντι παντοτε πασαν αυταρκειαν εχοντες περισσευητε εις παν αγαθον: "that, having an *all* sufficiency at *all* times in *all* things, ye may abound in *all* that is good." It would swell this note to an unnecessary length to cite instances of the same kind from the Hebrew poets. I refer the reader therefore to note on B. iv. v. 1. where the subject is resumed.

Ver. 887. *Thus, though the lines,*——] This comparison is exquisitely apposite and illustrative; and our poet recurs to it, and makes a still ampler use of it in ver. 971 of the present book, which see, as likewise the note on ver. 974. In the second, and some of the succeeding books, he also introduces the same illustration.

The argument itself is founded on strict and philosophic fact: and our modern metaphysicians have often availed themselves of it. Thus Dr. Clarke, almost in the words of our poet: "Every thing by composition, division, or motion, is nothing else but the very same it was before, taken either in whole or

Combin'd, and fitted to each rising want.
Nor small of import are the modes diverse
In which those seeds approach, recede, or blend:
Since heaven, and earth, and suns, and seas immense,
Herbs, instinct, reason, all are hence deriv'd:
The mode but chang'd, the matter still the same.
Thus, though the lines, these doctrines that recite,
Flow from the same fixt elemental types,
Yet line from line, in sense, in sound compar'd,
Egregious differs. Re-arranged alone,
Such the vast power by graphic types possest!

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by parts, or in different place or order. When two triangles, being put together, make a square, that square is still nothing but two triangles: or when a square cut in half makes two triangles, those two triangles are still only the two halves of a square; or when a mixture of blue and yellow powder makes a green, that green is still nothing but blue and yellow intermixed, as is plainly visible by the help of microscopes." Demonstration of the Being, &c. of God, 8vo. edit. p. 58.

Nothing can afford a stronger proof of the very extraordinary manner in which the same substance, under one arrangement or modification of its primary particles, may differ from the same substance when under another, than some late experiments of Mr. Chevenix, upon a supposed new metal, entitled Palladium; in the course of which he discovered that platina, whose specific gravity is more than 22, combined with mercury, whose specific gravity is nearly 14, produced a mass whose gravity was not more than about 11. These experiments are stated in a paper inserted in the Philosophical Transactions for 1803; and they lead to an additional remark, which is too much in point to be omitted: "A no less extraordinary degree of irregular density is daily before our eyes; yet it has not so much as attracted our attention. It is true that it is taken from among the gases. But, if we suppose that we have attained accuracy in experiments upon these subjects, I see no reason to refuse their evidence in this instance. The density of oxygen gas to that of water is as 1 to 740; and the density of hydrogen gas, as 1 to 9792. The mean density of that proportion of oxygen and hydrogen gases which constitutes water, is to that of water as 1 to 2098; or, in other words, water is 2098 times heavier than the mean density of its elements in the gaseous state. But water is only 1200 times heavier than steam, or water in the state of vapour. Therefore there is a variation in +, of 898, or nearly half, between the density of water and its elements, when both are in the aeriform state. This fact, however, regards bodies only as they remain in the same state, whether of solidity, liquidity, or fluidity. The anomaly is much greater, if we contemplate them as they pass from one of these states to the other. Yet we must not omit the consideration of such a change, in the instance of mercury alloyed with platina; for the former metal, before liquid, becomes solid as it enters into the new combination."

At, rerum quæ sunt primordia, plura adhibere
Possunt, unde queant variæ res quæque creari.
Nunc et Anaxagoræ scrutemur ὁμοιομερειαν,
Quam Graii memorant, nec nostrâ dicere linguâ
Concedit nobis patrii sermonis egestas :
Sed tamen ipsam rem facile est exponere verbis,
Principium rerum, quam dicit ὁμοιομερειαν·
Ossa videlicet e pauxillis atque minutis
Ossibus, sic et de pauxillis atque minutis
Visceribus viscus, gigni; sanguenque creari
Sanguinis inter se multis coëuntibus guttis :
Ex auræque putat micis consistere posse
Auram, et de terris terram concrescere parvis;
Ignibus ex igneis, humorem humoribus, esse,
Cætera consimili fingit, ratione, putatque;
Nec tamen esse ullâ parte idem in rebus inane
Concedit, neque corporibus finem esse secandis.

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Ver. 897. *From sapient* Anaxagoras,] This philosopher, concerning whose origin there is some dispute among the critics, was a native of Clazomenæ in Ionia. Metaphysics, and natural philosophy, were the continual subjects of his studies; and he travelled far with a view of benefiting himself by the observations of others. He died at the age of 62, about three centuries and a half before the Christian æra, at Lampsacus; to which place he was banished by the Athenians, in consequence of the aberration of his philosophic opinions from the popular creed of the day. His chief preceptors were Anaximenes and Pherecydes; of whom some account will be found in the notes on v. 765, 766, and 767, of this book. Plato introduces Socrates as speaking in high commendation of a work written by Anaxagoras on Physiology; and it is probable, that the tenets here attributed to him were first communicated to the world in that publication, and that it was hence our poet imbibed a knowledge of his hypothesis. Plutarch, however, l. i. 13, has informed us, that he was also the author of a book on *The Nature of Things*, which opens with an assertion, that the divine mind had produced and arranged every phænomenon in nature at one and the same time. Ὁμου παντα χρηματα ην, νους δ' αυτὰ διηρε και διεκοσμησε. Laertius reports, that he held the original atoms of matter to be possessed of the different powers and properties pre-

Start not when told, then, that the seeds of things
Boast powers superior, and can all create.
From such mistakes, detected and expos'd,
Now turn we: and in order next survey
Those doctrines first the Grecian schools imbib'd
From sapient Anaxagoras, by them
Term'd Homœomery; a phrase ourselves,
In tongue deficient, never can translate.
But these its institutes: that bone from bones,
Minute, and embryon, nerve from nerves arise,
And blood from blood, by countless drops increas'd.
Gold, too, from golden atoms, earths concrete
From earths extreme; from fiery matters fire,
And lymph from limpid dew. And thus throughout
From primal kinds that kinds perpetual spring.
Yet void he granted not in aught create,
Nor points extreme that never can divide.

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sented to us in their concrete state. That gold was thus produced from elemental particles of gold; and that every thing else was in the same manner formed from atoms, endowed with the very powers or virtues exhibited by things themselves. ελεγε αρχας τας ὁμοιομερειας καθαπερ γαρ εκ των ψηγματων λεγομεν τον χρυσον συνεστανα ι ὑυτως εκ των ὁμοιομερων μικρων σωματων το παν συγκεκριϭθαι.

"On voit," observes M. Levesque (Mem. de l'Instit. National Mor. et Polit. I.) "ce qui conduisit Anaxagore à ce resultat. Comme les autres philosophes, il nioit que rien pût se faire de rien; mais n'ayant pas observé la nature, et manquant de toutes connoissances en chymie, il ne concevoit pas que des substances pussent résulter de la combinaison de principes ou matières qui n'avoient aucune ressemblance avec ces substances." In this knowledge of chemistry, however, Epicurus, and his disciple before us, were well instructed, and it forms the very basis of their system.

Ver. 907. *Yet* void *he granted not in aught create,*
*Nor* points extreme——] The opinion of Anaxagoras is opposed by our poet in five separate arguments. It is false, as it neither allows a vacuum, nor physical and ultimate atoms; the absolute necessity of both which he has fully demonstrated in ver. 467, and following, and ver. 535, and following

Quâ re in utrâque mihi pariter ratione videtur
Errare; atque illis juxta, quos diximus ante. 845

The atomic rudiments of Anaxagoras are, moreover, too feeble and insignificant for his purpose. If large masses of any substance, as of flesh, for example, be from their nature subject to corruption and dissolution, the nature of the minute and original particles, whence these are derived, being the same, such particles must also be equally subject to dissolution, and can never re-produce, by conjunction, the same masses again. Animals, again, who are a composition of antagonist qualities and powers, of bony hardness, and adipose softness, of dry tendons, and liquid blood, are often nourished by a single species of food. But if the system of Anaxagoras be true, every individual species capable of nourishing an animal, must, in itself, be composed of adverse, and opposite qualities; it must be, at the same time, hard and soft, moist and dry. And to prove the absurdity of such an opinion in a manner still more obvious, he proceeds to observe, that as smoke, flame, and ashes, are all and equally educible from timber, each of these primary and opposite substances must have existed in the timber at the same time, prior to their separation; and that each of them, moreover, must have been perpetually imbibed from the earth, as the tree increased in its dimensions.

This hypothesis of Anaxagoras has seldom been embraced in its utmost latitude by modern philosophers and physiologists, but there are many opinions which evince a strong assimilation to it. Such is the doctrine of convertible and sympathetic medicines, which, less than a century ago, was universally assented to by the first physicians in every country; who, like Anaxagoras, appear to have imagined, that every part of the human frame received its nutriment, and recovered its health, from a digestion of the same parts of other animals, or from herbs of parallel or assimilating qualities. Thus the testes of the wild boar, reduced to powder, were esteemed an antidote in cases of barrenness; the lungs of a lamb, employed in the same manner, in pulmonic diseases; the medulla of all animals, in disorders of the nerves; and sperma ceti, or the fat of the whale, an infallible remedy in cases of marasmus, or general loss of fat from any internal disease, a remedy which has not even yet lost its good name with many practitioners, who still continue to believe, that

——the sovereign'st thing on earth,
Is parmaceti for an inward bruise.

Thus, too, in the botanic productions of the earth, nothing, about a century ago, was esteemed of such infallible utility for diseases for the eyes as the herb in our own language denominated Eye-bright; for a pain in the side as Stich-wort; for ruptures as Solomon's-seal; for lascivious ideas as the Agnus Dei, or Chaste-tree; for disorders of the bladder as Kidney-beans; and even in the present day, Scurvy-grass, among the vulgar, is held of paramount advantage in scorbutic complaints. Those who are acquainted with the writings of Etmuller, and Cole, published towards the latter end of the seventeenth century, will easily recall to mind a thousand such instances of sympathy and conversion, which uniformly seem to imply a general belief in some such doctrine as the homœomeria of Anaxagoras. M. Bonhomme's theory of the operation of calcareous phosphat, and its great advantage in the disease of the rickets, though far better founded, and of the date of the present day, is not very dissimilar in its origin.

But there are other systems which bear a still stronger resemblance to this doctrine. A few years ago, the female ovarium was supposed to be filled with cysts, and every cyst was conceived to be a perfect egg, with a complete human embryon in its interior; such was the doctrine of Harvey, Haller, and Bonnet. It was afterwards contended, that every animalcule in the male semen was a rudimentum homunculi; and that thousands of them existed in every drop. Such was the opinion of Ruysch, De Graaf, and Leuwenhoeck; who, moreover, asserted that the human, or any other animal fetus was produced by a deposit of some one of these animalcules of the

In both erroneous, and with those deceiv'd
Class'd in our numbers, and oppos'd above. 910

male in the ovarium or uterus of the female; which was a mere nidus for its evolution and perfect growth. In either case, however, the rudimentum homunculi, or the minute embryon, was supposed to be possessed of every limb and feature, or the rudiments of every limb and feature, that the human frame exhibits when in a state of perfection. It was in allusion to this last doctrine, to which indeed he appears to have been a complete proselyte, that Sir R. Blackmore wrote the following lines in his "*Creation:*"

When the crude embryo careful Nature breeds,
See how she works, and how her work proceeds;
While thro' the mass her energy she darts
To free and swell the complicated parts,
*Which only does unravel and untwist*
*Th'invelop'd limbs that previous there exist.* B. 6.

Perrault advanced far beyond this doctrine of evolution; and maintained that, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as *new generation* in any order of beings: that the Almighty created all things in the beginning; and that what we term generations are only augmentations or expansions of the minute parts of the bodies of seeds. So that every order, class, and species of every thing that has existed, does exist, or will exist hereafter, were all really formed at first, and inclosed in such seeds, to be brought forth and unfolded to view at definite times, and according to definite arrangements. Perrault appears, completely, therefore, to have imbibed the old philosophy of Anaxagoras, without knowing it; or, if he knew it, at least, without acknowledging it.

Whilst upon this subject, I cannot avoid noticing the resemblance of this opinion of Perrault with that of the primordial egg of the Bramins, of which the Ordinances of Menu give us the following account, as translated from the original Sanscrit by Sir Wm. Jones. "He whom the mind alone can perceive, having willed to produce various beings from his own divine substance, first, with a thought, created the waters, and placed in them a productive seed. That *seed* became an egg bright as gold, blazing like the luminary, with a thousand beams; and in that egg he was born himself, in the form of Brahma, the great forefather of all spirits. In that egg the great power sat inactive a whole year of the creator, at the close of which, by his thought alone, he caused the egg to divide itself; and from its two divisions he framed the heaven above, and the earth beneath; and in the midst he placed the subtile ether, the eight regions, and the permanent receptacle of waters." Vol. iii. p. 66.

Much of this doctrine was afterwards introduced into Greece, probably by Orpheus, through the medium of Egypt, and was, for many centuries, regarded as sacred and indisputable.

Among modern theories of generation, that of Dr. Darwin has lately excited the greatest degree of attention. It supposes the human frame to emanate from a fibril of the male, uniting with seminal molecules of the female. But his view of the origin of plants appears to be different, and bears a closer approximation to the theory of Ruysch and De Graaf. If my memory fail me not, he has asserted, both in his Botanic Garden, and his Phytologia, that the seeds of all plants contain in their substance, not only the germ or rudiment of the future plant, but the whole of its leaves and branches; as does, likewise, the bud of the pedicularis and hepatica; and the hybernacle of the hyacinth, and most other plants propagated from bulbous roots.

The very accurate Spalanzani has indeed discovered in these bulbous roots different races of the same plant to the fourth generation; and has traced the same appearance in a variety of animals as well as vegetables. In the female volvox, an insect found chiefly in infusions of hemp-seed and tremella, and the putrid water of dunghills, some naturalists of his acquaintance, he tells us, observed the future fetus in the womb extending to the fifth generation. He has himself traced it to the third, even through

Adde, quod inbecilla nimis primordia fingit;
Si primordia sunt, simili quæ prædita constant
Naturâ atque ipsæ res sunt; æqueque laborant,
Et pereunt; neque ab exitio res ulla refrænat.
Nam quid in obpressu valido durabit eorum,
Ut mortem ecfugiat, leti sub dentibus ipsis?
Ignis? an humor? an aura? quid horum? sanguis an? anne os?
Nihil, ut opinor; ubi ex æquo res funditus omnis
Tam mortalis erit, quam quæ manifesta videmus
Ex oculis nostris, aliquâ vi functa, perire.
At neque recidere ad nihilum res posse, neque autem
Crescere de nihilo, testor res ante probatas.
Præterea, quoniam cibus auget corpus, alitque;
Scire licet, nobis venas, et sanguen, et ossa,
Et nervos, alienigenis ex partibus esse:
Sive cibos omneis conmixto corpore dicent
Esse, et habere in se nervorum corpora parva,
Ossaque, et omnino venas, parteisque cruoris;
Fiet, utei cibus omnis et aridus et liquor ipse
Ex alienigenis rebus constare putentur,
Ossibus, et nervis, venisque, et sanguine, mixta.

---

the diaphonous membrane of the mother; and when isolated, he has descried a regular series to the thirteenth generation: and perhaps, as he observes, even this, was not the last. In many other instances, says he, we have found one egg within another, and some obscure part of a fetus within another fetus. In like manner, the butterfly is included in the shell of the chrysalis, and the chrysalis in the skin of the caterpillar.

The theories founded upon these appearances are all of them so many approximations towards the Homœomeria of Anaxagoras. The generative

Too feeble, too, the rudiments he chose,
If rudiments they be, that hold, at once,
The powers of things, and form the things themselves.
All toil alike, and perish void of aid:
For, when the hour of dissolution draws,
Say, which can baffle the dread fangs of death?
Can ether, lymph, or fire? can nerve, or bones?
In each the strife were vain: since all produc'd,
Survey'd, or viewless, impotent alike,
Must yield to fate, and perish unredeem'd.
But things produc'd to nought can never fall,
Or fall'n, regerminate, as prov'd above.
Food rears the body, and its growth sustains:
But well we know its tendons, nerves, and blood,
Hence all matur'd, are foreign and unlike.
If, then, each food be compound, if commixt
With miniatures of all, of blood and nerve,
Of bone, and veins; each food compact, or moist,
Of parts unlike must then itself consist;
Of bone, of blood, of tendon, vein, and nerve.

system of Buffon has an equal assimilation. It supposes an intermixture of the seminal fluid of both sexes in the uterus necessary to produce the future fetus; and asserts, that this fluid consists of organic molecules, secreted from every limb and organ of the parent bodies, which arrange themselves in the formation of the fetus into the same limbs and organs as those from which they were secerned. See a further account of this theory in note on b. iv. 1264.

Præterea, quæquomque e terrâ corpora crescunt,
Si sunt in terris, terram constare necesse est
Ex alienigenis, quæ terris exoriuntur.
Transfer item, totidem verbis utare licebit:
In lignis si flamma latet, fumusque, cinisque,
Ex alienigenis consistant ligna, necesse est;
Ex alienigenis, quæ lignis exoriuntur.
Linquitur heic quædam latitandi copia tenuis,
Id, quod Anaxagoras sibi sumit; ut omnibus omneis
Res putet inmixtas rebus latitare, sed illud
Adparere unum, quoius sint plurima mixta,
Et magis in promptu, primâque in fronte, locata:
Quod tamen a verâ longe ratione repulsum est.
Conveniebat enim fruges quoque sæpe, minaci
Robore quom in saxi franguntur, mittere signum
Sanguinis, aut aliquid, nostro quæ corpore aluntur:
Quom lapidem in lapidem terimus, manare cruorem:
Consimili ratione herbis quoque, sæpe decebat
Et laticis dulceis guttas, similique sapore
Mittere, lanigeræ quales sunt ubere lactis:
Scilicet; et glebis terrarum sæpe friatis

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Ver. 937. *But here, the ready answer, fram'd of yore,*] This reply of Anaxagoras and his disciples has been noticed by Aristotle, in the following observation, as translated by Gassendi: Res et apparere et denominari invicem differentes aiunt, ab eo quod in infinitorum mistura maxime abundat. Non enim esse totum pure aut album, aut nigrum, aut dulce, aut carnem, aut os; cujus autem amplius unumquodque habet, eam talis rei naturam videri: "they contend, that things actually appear, and derive their different de-

Thus all things spring from earth: but if in earth
All lurk invelop'd, earth of forms consists
Strange, and discordant, panting for the day.
Change still the picture, and the same still flows:
In timbers, thus, if smoke, flame, ashes blend,
Then, too, those timbers hostile parts comprise.

But, here, the ready answer, fram'd of yore,
By him, the founder of the system, springs:
That, though in all things all things lurk commixt,
What most prevails, what boasts the largest share,
Lies superficial, and is notic'd chief.
Fruitless remark, unsolid, and untrue.
For still, at times, when crush'd to dust minute
Beneath the pond'rous mill-stone's mighty orb
The crumbling corn with human blood must weep,
Or aught besides of fluid found in man,
And stain with hues obscene: and still, at times,
Each herb unfold the balmy milk so sweet,
That swells the fleecy flock, or odorous kine.
The furrow'd glebe, the lab'ring plough beneath,

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nominations from those atoms which principally abound in the general mass. For the entire substance is never universally either white, or black, or sweet, or flesh, or bone; but which properties soever of these it possesses in the largest degree, the nature and name of those properties it seems principally entitled to."

To this observation, Lucretius replies with much logical force and precision. His argument is clear and demonstrative, and requires no comment.

Herbarum genera, et fruges, frundeisque videri,
Dispartita, ac in terram latitare minute:
Postremo, in lignis cinerem fumumque videri,
Quom præfracta forent, igneisque latere minutos.
Quorum nihil fieri quoniam manifesta docet res,
Scire licet, non esse in rebus res ita mixtas;
Verum semina multimodis inmixta latere
Multarum rerum in rebus communia debent.
At, sæpe in magnis fit montibus, inquis, ut altis
Arboribus vicina cacumina summa terantur
Inter se, validis facere id cogentibus austris,
Donec flammaï fulserunt flore coorto:
Scilicet; et non est lignis tamen insitus ignis;
Verum semina sunt ardoris multa, terendo

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Ver. 958. *But should'st thou urge*, &c.] This phenomenon, of the tops of forests suddenly taking fire from the violent collision of branch against branch, has been adverted to by Thucydides, and many later historians. They are still frequent in the immense forests of Finland, and are noticed, but differently accounted for, by M. Acerbi, in his journey from Yervendale to Wasa. "Partial fires," says he, "conflagrations and tempests had committed frightful ravages in the bosom of this forest, which presented us, here and there, with exhibitions highly surprising and impressive. Every body has heard of the conflagrations so frequent in Sweden, and in the countries of the North in general. Entire mountains, and tracts of several miles, covered with woods, are liable to be devoured by flames. Much has been said, and written, in order to explain the origin of those fires. Some have attributed them to the rays of the sun, which continue so long above the horison;—but this is fabulous, and unworthy of notice." He then, generally, ascribes them to two common causes: the peasants smoking their pipes as they travel through the woods, together with their cooking their food as they proceed; and a right granted to them by their political constitution, of cutting down and carrying away from the crown lands all trees and fragments of trees that have been injured by fires: to obtain which privilege they often purposely excite them. "I saw," continues he, "in this forest, the disastrous wreck of one of those conflagrations which had devoured the wood through an extent of six or seven miles, and which exhibited a most dismal spectacle. You not only saw trunks and large remains of trees lying in confusion on the

Must, too, develope, in its secret womb,
Plants, fruits, and foliage, oft dispers'd, and hid:
And, to the woodman, the cleft stock disclose
With ashes smoke, and smoke commixt with fire.
These, facts deny: in things things ne'er exist;
But seeds of things, in various modes arrang'd,
Various themselves: whence rises all survey'd.

But should'st thou urge that oft beneath the storm,
When rubb'd by many a repercussion rude,
Branch against branch, the forest's topmost height
Has blaz'd from tree to tree; the fact we grant:
Not, with each trunk, that native fires combine;
But that perpetual friction quick collects
Their seeds dispers'd; hence gathering ten-fold force,

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ground, and reduced to the state of charcoal, but also trees standing upright, which, though they had escaped destruction, had yet been miserably scorched: others black, and bending down to one side, whilst, in the midst of the ruins of trunk and branches, appeared a group of young trees rising to replace the former generation; and, full of vigour and vegetable life, seemed to be deriving their nourishment from the ashes of their parents." Acerbi's Travels, I. p. 229. 231.

Ver. 960. ——*the forest's topmost height*
*Has blaz'd*——] The description of the forest in flames, in the Æneid, is not widely different from the present, in several of its bearings.

Ac velut optato, ventis æstate coortis,
Dispersa immittit sylvis incendia pastor:
Correptis subito mediis, extenditur una
Horrida per latos acies Vulcania campos:
Ille sedens victor flammas despectat ovantes.
L. x. 405.

As when, in summer, welcome winds arise,
The watchful shepherd to the forest flies,
And fires the midmost shrubs; contagion spreads,
And rushing flames infest the neighb'ring heads:
Around the forest flies the burning blast,
And all the leafy nation sinks at last,
And Vulcan rides in triumph o'er the waste.
The pastor, pleas'd with his dire victory,
Beholds the satiate flames in sheets ascend the sky.
Dryden.

Ver. 964. *Their seeds dispers'd*;—] The "seeds of fire," or "flame," is a common expression among the poets. Thus Homer,

Quæ quom confluxere, creant incendia sylvis.
Quod, si facta foret sylvis abscondita flamma,
Non possent ullum tempus celarier ignes:
Confacerent volgo sylvas, arbusta cremarent.
Jamne vides igitur, paullo quod diximus ante,
Permagni referre, eadem primordia sæpe
Cum quibus, et quali positurâ, contingantur;
Et quos inter se dent motus, adcipiantque?
Atque eadem, paullo inter se mutata, creare
Igneis e lignis? quo pacto verba quoque ipsa
Inter se paullo mutatis sunt elementis,
Quom ligna atque igneis distinctâ voce notemus.
Denique, jam quæquomque in rebus cernis apertis,
Si fieri non posse putas, quin materiaï
Corpora consimili naturâ prædita fingas,

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Σπερμα πυρος σωζων—— Odyss. E. 490.
The seeds of fire preserving——

So Pindar, in his Olympics,

——εχοντες
Σπερμ' ανεδαν φλογος ου vii. 87.
Untended by the seeds of fire,
Still to the temple pressed they.——

Hence Virgil,

—— semina flammæ
Abstrusa in venis silicis—— Æneid. vi. 6.
—— the seeds of flame
Hid in the harsh flint's veins——

But the following, from Manilius, is a copy from our own poet,

Sunt autem cunctis permixti partibus ignes;
Ac silice in dura, *viridique* in *cortice*, sedem
Inveniunt, cum *sylva*, *sibi collisa crematur*:
Ignibus usque adeo natura est omnis abundans.
i. 854.

Fire lurks, commixt, in all things:—the tough flint
Grants it a seat; and e'en the verdant bark,
When flames the forest, branch abrading branch:
From scene to scene so nature swells with fire.

Ver. 974. *As* FLUE *and* FUEL, *terms of different sound,*] The mode of reasoning adopted by our poet in verse 887 is here recurred to; and it is sufficiently strong and apposite, to warrant a repetition. The terms employed in the original are

And flame engend'ring. For could fire itself
A part constituent of the forest form,
No hour could hide the mischief; ev'ry tree
Would blaze, and burn till boundless ruin reign'd.
See, then, as earlier sung, how much imports
Th' arrangement, motion, magnitude, and form
Of primal seeds combin'd: and how the same,
Transpos'd but little, fuel quick convert
To flame, bright blazing up the swarthy flue:
As FLUE and FUEL, terms of different sound,
Of different sense, their letters but transpos'd,
Each into each converts with magic speed.
But should'st thou urge that all things still may flow
From primal seeds, and yet those seeds possess
The form, the nature of the things themselves;

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*ligna* and *igneis*, or wood and fire; but as these, in our own language, by no means convey the poet's orthographic illustration, I have found it necessary to introduce a slight change, which, in every respect, answers and elucidates his intention. The version of Evelyn and Creech, as well as that of Guernier, who has followed the two former, retain the Latin terms *lignum* and *ignis*, but with extreme awkwardness in lines that pretend to give a translation. Marchetti has endeavoured to avoid this evil; but, in his escape, has introduced one quite as considerable, by the adoption of terms, which, though orthographically expressive of our poet's intention, have no kind of connexion with his metaphors.

E puono gli stessi variati alquanto
Far le *legne* e le *fiamme* appunto come
Puongli gli elementi variati alquanto
Formare ed *arme* ed *orme* e *rame* e *rome*.

Coutures has been more unhappy than any of the translators; for without daring, like Marchetti, to introduce new terms, he has given those of the original literally translated into his own language, where they make a more awkward, and inapposite appearance than even the Latin terms preserved in the three English versions. Rendered by Coutures, the Latin *lignum* and *ignis* become *bois* and *feu*; but by what means these words, which have not a single letter in common, can be orthographically transposed into each other, or how they can possibly explain the poet's meaning, it is not easy to determine.

Hac ratione tibi pereunt primordia rerum:
Fiet, utei risu tremulo concussa cachinnent,
Et lacrumis salsis humectent ora, genasque.
Nunc age, quod super est, cognosce, et clarius audi:
Nec me animi fallit, quam sint obscura; sed acri
Percussit thyrso laudis spes magna meum cor,
Et simul incussit suavem mî in pectus amorem
Musarum: quo nunc instinctus, mente vigenti
Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo: juvat integros adcedere funteis,

---

Ver. 980. *The scheme falls self-destroy'd.*——] Nothing can be more ridiculous than to suppose the possession of opposite qualities in compound substances, derived from the possession of such opposite qualities in the elemental atoms of nature. And yet, if the system of Anaxagoras be true, this absurdity must be true likewise; and as in the case of sudden joy, or violent agony, persons of irritable habits, when thrown into an hysteric paroxysm, are accustomed, not unfrequently, to laugh and weep at the same moment; the same extravagant effects ought to be exhibited, with equal frequency, in many of the atoms of which the human frame is composed.

Ver. 983. *Come, now, and mark perspicuous what remains.*] The whole of this apostrophe to Memmius is beautiful beyond expression; and has been imitated, in almost every line, by a variety of the most elegant and accomplished of ancient and modern poets.

Thus Virgil, in his address to his patron:

Nec sum animi dubius, verbis ea vincere magnum
Quam sit, et angustis hunc addere rebus honorem.
Sed me Parnassi deserta per ardua dulcis
Raptat amor: juvat ire jugis, qua nulla priorum
Castaliam molli devertitur orbita clivo.

Geo. iii. 289.

I, conscious of the toil, will strive to raise
The lowly theme, and grace with labour'd lays:
Tranc'd by sweet love o'er unfrequented heights,
Where no smooth trace to Castaly invites,
I pierce the wild by mortal foot untrod,
And lonely commune with th' Aonian god.

Sotheby.

Thus also Akenside:

———but the love
Of nature and the muses bids explore
Through secret paths, erewhile untrod by man,
The fair poetic region, to detect
Untasted springs, to drink inspiring draughts,
And shade my temples with unfading flowers,
Cull'd from the laureat vale's profound recess,
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before.

Pleas. of Imag. i.

Thus too, the abbé De Lille, alluding to our poet by name, in the following address to his muse:

Toi donc, qui, mariant la grâce et la vigueur
Sais du chant didactique animer la langueur,
O Muse! si jadis, dans les vers de Lucrèce
Des austères leçons tu polis la rudesse,—
Viens orner un sujet plus riche, plus fertile,
Dont le charme autrefois avoit tenté Virgile.

The scheme falls self-destroy'd.—For then, must seeds
Hold pow'rs adverse; and laugh, and shake their sides,
While tears of anguish down their cheeks distil.
Come, now, and mark perspicuous what remains.
Obscure the subject: but the thirst of fame
Burns all my bosom; and through ev'ry nerve
Darts the proud love of letters, and the muse.
I feel th' inspiring power; and roam resolv'd
Through paths PIERIAN never trod before.
Sweet are the springing founts with nectar new;

---

*N'empruntons point ici d'ornement etranger;*
*Viens, de mes propres fleurs mon front va s'ombrager.*
LES JARDINS, CHANT i.

Thou, who, to vigour marrying sprightly grace,
In nervous verse didatic truth canst trace,
O Muse! of yore who, when LUCRETIUS sung
Didst smooth his subject, and sublime his tongue,
Now o'er a richer theme exert thy pride,
A theme by Maro's magic numbers tried:
*Come, let no borrow'd ornaments be mine,*
*With my own flowers my shadowy brows entwine.*

Horace has a passage in his Epistles so extremely in point with this of Lucretius, that it is either a designed imitation, or affords a striking parallel:

Libera per vacuum posui vestigia princeps:
Non aliena meo pressi pede. l. i. ep. 19.

I my free footsteps in a path untried,
First fix, and tread in regions all my own.

Manilius has a few verses to the same effect:

Aggredior, primusque novis Helicona movere
Cantibus, et viridi mutantes vertice sylvas;
Hospita sacra ferens, nulli memorata priorum.

The Heliconian streams, and nodding groves
I first approach, with numbers unessay'd,
Oblations bearing, borne till now by none.

Lambinus has recorded the following verses from Oppian, as bearing a striking resemblance to a part of our poet's address:

Εγρεω, και τρηχειαν επιστειβωμεν αταρπον
Την μεροπων ου πω τις ἑης επατησεν αοιδαις. v. 20.

Come, let us tread the rugged path,
By poet never trod before.

Nor can we be otherwise than reminded of Milton's elegant address to the heavenly muse, in the opening of his first book of Paradise Lost, which most of his annotators refer to this common source:

——— I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That, with no middle flight, intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhime.

He had before read an address of the same kind in Cowley's Davideis:

Guide my bold steps———
In these untrodden paths to sacred fame.

Thus also Armstrong, Art of preserving Health, book ii.

Come now, ye Naiads, to the fountains lead!
Now let me wander thro' your gelid reign:
I turn to view th' enthusiastic wilds,
By mortal else untrod.

Atque haurire; juvatque novos decerpere flores,
Insignemque meo capiti petere inde coronam,
Unde prius nulli velarint tempora Musæ.
Primum, quod magnis doceo de rebus, et artis
Religionum animum nodis exsolvere pergo:
Deinde, quod obscurâ de re tam lucida pango
Carmina, Musæo contingens cuncta lepore:
Id quoque enim non ab nullâ ratione videtur;

---

Ver. 991. *Those flow'rs to pluck, and weave a roseat wreath,*] The translation of Creech has metamorphosed this flowery wreath of our poet into a chaplet of *laurel:*

——none of all the mighty tuneful Nine
Shall grace a head with laurels like to mine.

His commentator on this passage, however, candidly observes, that in the original no mention is made of laurel; and that garlands and wreaths of *ivy* seem to have been the first ornament of poets, and other learned men, and laurel the decoration of conquerors. Thus Horace:

"Me doctarum *Hederæ* præmia frontium
Dîs miscent superis."

Yet it is very uncertain whether the *me* in this address of Horace ought not to be *te*, and refer to Mæcenas, the poet's patron, agreeably to the ingenious conjecture of Rutgers, who has since been followed by a variety of able critics of all countries. Be this, however, as it may, it is obvious, that Lucretius has no allusion either to the ivy or the laurel in the passage before us, for he expressly employs the term *flores*, or *flowers*, which will not conveniently apply to either of them:

——juvatque novos decerpere flores,
Insignemque meo capiti petere INDE coronam.

Sweet the new flowers that bloom, but sweeter still
Those flowers to pluck, and weave a roseat wreath.

The custom of adorning with crowns, or chaplets of flowers interwoven with foliage, those who had peculiarly distinguished themselves in the arts of war, of music, or of poetry, is almost as ancient as those arts themselves. It was occasionally forbidden, under severe penalties, by the more zealous of the Roman emperors, after their conversion to Christianity, as being supposed to partake of the superstitions of paganism. Petrarc, however, to a certainty, even so late as the middle of the fourteenth century, was fortunate enough to enjoy this honour of poetic coronation, conferred with every possible degree of publicity and splendour, and attended upon by the senators, and many of the council, at the Roman capitol: a detailed account of which transaction is inserted in Tiraboschi's Storia della Literatura Italiana. There is great reason also to believe, notwithstanding the doubts which have been entertained on the subject by some persons, that Ariosto, a full century afterwards, was admitted to a similar distinction, and was even crowned by the hands of the emperor Charles V. Such, at least, is the declaration of the monument now in existence in the church of the Benedictines at Florence, erected to his memory in the year 1612, by Ludovico Ariosto, a collateral branch of his family.

Of all the Grecian poets, Anacreon is the most frequent in his reference to this custom of decorating the temples with flowery chaplets; and his flower is,

Sweet the new flowers that bloom: but sweeter still
Those flow'rs to pluck, and weave a roseat wreath,
The muses yet to mortals ne'er have deign'd.
With joy the subject I pursue; and free
The captiv'd mind from superstition's yoke.
With joy th' obscure illume; in liquid verse,
Graceful, and clear, depicting all survey'd:
By reason guided. For as oft, benign,
The sapient nurse, when anxious to enforce

---

on almost every occasion, the rose. Thus, Od. xv. edit. Barnes:

Ου μοι μελει Γυγαο
Του Σαρδεων ανακτος
Εμοι μελει ροδοισι
Καταστεφειν καρηνα

I care not for the idle state
Of Persia's king, the rich, the great!
But oh! be mine the *rosy braid*,
The fervour of my brows to shade.

Moore.

The custom was probably of Asiatic origin, yet the Persian poets seem to have been fonder of strewing roses around them, than of entwining them in their hair; at least, the latter fashion is by no means so frequently referred to as the former. Thus, Hafiz, in one of his most beautiful gazels:

کوري خوار نعرة زنان در چمن رويم
چون بلبلان نزول کنيم اشيان کل

Come, jovial, to the garden lead,
Let noise, and mirth, and madness vie;
Like nightingales, from anguish freed,
*In nests of roses let us lie.*

In like manner, the sentimental Sadi, in his Gulistan:

نه بلبل بر کلش تسبيح حوانست
که هر خاري بسبيحش زبانست

'Tis not the nightingale alone
That, *seated mid the rose's sweets*,
Talks of her charms in tenderest tone;
For every thorn the theme repeats.

Ver. 998. ——*For as oft, benign,*
*The sapient nurse, when anxious to enforce*] This simile, as well as many others which will appear as we proceed, has been closely copied by Tasso in his Jerusalem Delivered. I cannot, however, agree with his commentator Nardius, that the copy is superior to the original: "dum æmulatur," says he of Torquato, "palmam auctori eripuit." Let the reader compare them:

Sai che là corre il mondo ove piu versi
Di sue dolcezze il lusinghier Parnasso;
E che il vero condito in molli versi,
I piu schivi allettando ha persuaso.
Così all' egro fanciul porgiamo aspersi
Di soave licor gli orli del vaso:
Succhi amari ingannato intanto ei beve,
E dall' inganno sua vita riceve. Cant. i.

Sed, velutei pueris absinthia tetra medentes
Quom dare conantur, prius oras, pocula circum,
Contingunt mellis dulci flavoque liquore,
Ut puerorum ætas inprovida ludificetur
Labrorum tenus; interea perpotet amarum
Absinthii laticem, deceptaque non capiatur,
Sed potius, tali facto recreata, valescat:
Sic ego nunc, quoniam hæc ratio plerumque videtur
Tristior esse, quibus non est tractata, retroque
Volgus abhorret ab hac; volui tibi suaviloquenti
Carmine Pierio rationem exponere nostram,
Et quasi Musæo dulci contingere melle;
Si tibi forte animum tali ratione tenere
Versibus in nostris possem, dum perspicis omnem
Naturam rerum, quâ constet compta figurâ.
Sed, quoniam docui, solidissima materiaï
Corpora perpetuo volitare, invicta per ævom;

---

Thou know'st the world with eager transport throng
Where sweet Parnassus breathes the tuneful song;
That truth can oft, in pleasing strains convey'd,
Allure the fancy, and the mind persuade.
Thus, the sick infant's taste disguised to meet,
We tinge the vessel's brim with juices sweet;
Meantime the bitter draught his lip receives;
He drinks deceiv'd, and so deceiv'd, he lives.
Hoole.

A copy of this same passage is, likewise, to be met with in the orations of Themistius. Without swelling this note unnecessarily, by citing it, the reader may find it, if he please, by turning to that addressed ad Nicomedienses.

Ver. 1005. ——*in honey'd phrase,*
*Tun'd by the muses,*——] Our poet, in this verse, appears to have had his eye turned to the following passage of Pindar, which I copy. I will give it with an emendation approved by Mr. Wakefield:

Τιν δ' ἀϐυεπτης τε λυρα,
Γλυκυς τ' αυλος ΑΝΑ-
ΠΑΣΣΕΙ χαριν· εχοντι δ' ευρυ κλεος

On the pale boy, the wormwood's bitter draught,
With luscious honey tints the goblet's edge,
Deceiving thus, while yet un-us'd to guile,
His unsuspecting lip; till deep he drinks,
And gathers vigour from the venial cheat:
So I, since dull the subject, and the world
Abash'd recoils, would fain, in honey'd phrase,
Tun'd by the muses, to thine ear recite
Its vast concerns; if haply I may hope
To fix thine audience, while the flowing verse
Unfolds the nature, and the forms of things.

Taught, then, already that material seeds
Are solid, and o'er time triumphant live,

---

Κοραι Πιεριδες Διος.
Εγω δε, συνεφαπτομενος σπουδᾳ,
Κλυτον εθνος Λοκρων αμφεπεσον, ΜΕΛΙΤΙ
δ' ευανορα πολιν Καταβρεχων, παιδ' ε-
ρατον Γ' Αρχεστρατου αινησα. Ol. x. 113.

The dulcet reed thy glory sings,
The soft-tun'd lyre responsive rings;
And all th' Aonian maids renown'd
Spread through the world, th' exulting sound.
I, too, amidst the festive strains
That glad the fam'd, the Locrian plains,
Plains with liquid honey flowing,
Luscious draughts to Locrians dear,—
I too, fond youth! with rapture glowing,
Will pour thy praise thro' every ear.

Ver. 1010. *Taught, then, already that material seeds*] Our scientific poet, in the following verses, proceeds to develope another principle of Epicurean philosophy, and endeavours to demonstrate, that the Universe is not, as was maintained by many of the disciples of Zeno, bounded either as to its vacuum or its matter, but uniformly immense, and infinite. Many of his arguments are forcible; and if they do not produce conviction, must at least be admitted to be highly ingenious.

Nunc, age, summaï quædam sit finis eorum,
Necne sit, evolvamus: item, quod inane repertum est,
Seu locus, ac spatium, res in quo quæque gerantur,
Pervideamus, utrum finitum funditus omne
Constet, an inmensum pateat, vasteque profundum.
Omne quod est, igitur, nullâ regione viarum
Finitum est; namque extremum debebat habere:
Extremum porro nullius posse videtur
Esse, nisi ultra sit quod finiat; ut videatur,
Quo non longius hæc sensûs natura sequatur.
Nunc, extra summam quoniam nihil esse fatendum,
Non habet extremum; caret ergo fine, modoque:
Nec refert, quibus adsistas regionibus ejus:
Usque adeo, quem quisque locum possedit, in omneis
Tantumdem parteis infinitum omne relinquit.
Præterea, si jam finitum constituatur
Omne, quod est, spatium, si quis procurrat ad oras
Ultimus extremas, jaciatque volatile telum,

---

Ver. 1017. *Th'* ENTIRE *of things, then, bounds can never know:*] This first argument of Lucretius is a verbal copy from Epicurus, as contained in his Epistle to Herodotus: Αλλα μην το παν απειρον εστι, &c. Cicero has likewise adopted and illustrated it in his Second Book on Divination; nor has it escaped the notice of modern metaphysicians and philosophers. Bruno, who wrote a treatise, Dell' Infinito Universo, towards the close of the seventeenth century, enriched it with the entire catalogue of the arguments here offered by Lucretius, to which he added not less than eight-and-twenty new ones, offering in the whole, a most redoubtable phalanx of opposition to every antagonist who chose to take up the gauntlet he thus threw down. It is in this manner he concludes, with no small portion of self-confidence: che non si puo negare il spazio infinito se non con la voce, come fanno gli pertinaci, &c. "that it is impossible for the infinitude of space to be denied by any but those who are wantonly perverse, and will not attend to the innumerable proofs that are adduced in its favour."

Attend, benignant, while we next decide
Their number, or if infinite; and tell,
Since VOID throughout exists, assigning space
For place and motion, if th' ENTIRE of things
Be bounded, or unfathom'd, and immense.
Th' ENTIRE of things, then, bounds can never know:
Else parts possest of farthest and extreme.
But parts can only be extreme, beyond
Where other substance springs, those parts extreme
Binding, though sense the limit ne'er can trace.
If, then, some other substance rise, the first
Forms not th' ENTIRE of things. Whate'er it be
That other substance still must part compose.
Vain too is distance: the vast whole alike
To all extends, embracing, and embrac'd.
Yet grant th' ENTIRE of things of bound possest.
Say, to what point shall yon keen archer, plac'd
E'en on its utmost verge, his dart direct?

---

Ver. 1028. *Say, to what point shall yon keen archer, plac'd*
*E'en on its utmost verge, his dart direct?*] This perplexing appeal of our poet has been immediately noticed by the Cardinal Poligac in his antagonist poem. The following is his copy of it, and his reply:

At si materiam claudunt circumundique fines
Illam ultra, quæris, quo sit ventura sagitta
Quam bonus arcitenens valido contorserit arcu.
Ex errore tuo dubium tibi nascitur illud.
Ultra materiem nihil est: mittesne sagittam
In nihilum? nihilo non est locus: ergo resistet,
Nec poterit telum vetitos erumpere fines,
Et vires frustra effusas mirabitur arcus.
ANTI-LUCR. lib. 3.

Here should'st thou ask, if matter still have bounds,
Where shall yon arrow, on those bounds extreme,
Loos'd from the tortur'd bow, direct its flight?
The question springs from error: for beyond
Lies nothing: into nothing wouldst thou urge

Id validis utrum contortum viribus ire,
Quo fuerit missum, mavis, longeque volare;
An prohibere aliquid censes, obstareque, posse?
Alterutrum fatearis enim, sumasque, necesse est:
Quorum utrumque tibi ecfugium præcludit, et omne
Cogit ut exemptâ concedas fine patere.
Nam, sive est aliquid, quod prohibeat, ecficiatque,
Quo minus, quo missum est, veniat, finique locet se;
Sive foras fertur, non est a fine profectum.
Hoc pacto sequar; atque, oras ubiquomque locaris
Extremas, quæram quid telo denique fiat.
Fiet, utei nusquam possit consistere finis;
Ecfugiumque fugæ prolatet copia semper.

---

Th' adventurous dart? those bounds would still resist,
And the keen arrow urge its force in vain.

But if *nothing* lie beyond this bounded material system, then it is bounded by *nothing*; and if it be bounded by nothing then, again, has it no bounds whatever; and of course there would be nothing to resist the farther flight of the arrow. So that the force of our poet's appeal still remains uninvalidated. The learned Bruno, indeed, in his first Dialogue, Dell' Infinito Universo, to which I have just referred, introduces this argument as altogether irrefragable. In reality, there seems to be no more impiety in attaching the idea of immensity to space, than of endless duration to eternity; and, according to Mr. Locke, we acquire both ideas in the same manner, and at the same time. Whilst I am appealing to this celebrated philosopher, I cannot avoid quoting an illustration of his own in confirmation of this very doctrine; and which has such a strange coincidence with his example of an archer placed on the imaginary confines of creation, that it is difficult to avoid conceiving Mr. Locke had Lucretius in his recollection at the time of writing it. "If BODY, observes he, be not supposed infinite, which I think no one will affirm, I would ask, whether, if God placed a man at the extremity of corporeal beings, he could not stretch his hand beyond his body? If he could, then he would put his arm where there was before *space* without *body*: and if there he spread his fingers, there would be still *space* between them without *body*. If he could *not* stretch out his hand, it must be because of some external hindrance: and then I ask, whether that which hinders his hand from moving outwards be substance, or accident, something, or nothing?" Hum. Und. b. ii. ch. 13.

M. Cabanis, however, is a bolder man than any of the philosophers I have yet adverted to. He derives his idea of every species of existence from self-motion; and he is not afraid of Mr. Locke's question, if indeed, which I much doubt, he ever met with it. "That which opposes me," says he, "when I move, I

Shall aught obstruct it, or the path be clear?
Take which thou wilt: some substance chuse, possest
Of pow'r t' impede, and check its rapid race:
Or let it fly unconquer'd, nor restraint
E'en once encounter: thou must still confess
Th' ENTIRE of nature nought of limit knows.
Throughout the dart I'll chase; and when, at length,
Th' acceded bound is gain'd, I'll still demand
What yet obstructs it; still new proofs adduce
That the vast whole is boundless; and that flight
Still beyond flight for ever might be urg'd.

---

denominate an obstacle, a body. If this body, or obstacle, did not exist, I should be able to persevere in my motion. Hence, from that which does not prevent me from moving, and from that which does, from *nothing*, and from *body*, I derive the idea of *space*. I call it *void* if I find *nothing*, and *full* if I meet with *bodies*. It is therefore impossible to know whether space be a substance or a quality; for it is not, strictly speaking, either the one or the other: it is an abstract idea, compounded of those of body and non-entity, considered with relation to my sense of motion. If any one inquire of me, whether space exist beyond the bounds of the Universe, I reply, that beyond the bounds of the *whole*, there exists *nothing*; and that, if I were there, I should certainly not be incommoded in moving." Mem. de l'Instit. Nat. Phys. et Mor. I. M. Cabanis is, however, in as great a dilemma as the cardinal: to move into *nothing*, is precisely the same thing as *not to move at all*. How is he to know that he moves, or what is to measure his progress? How would he, as a human being at least, derive a support for his feet, or air for his lungs? I may safely say, that he would not move far.

It is highly probable, Virgil had his eye directed to this passage of our poet in composing the verses that follow, although I do not find that the resemblance has been hitherto noticed by any of the commentators on either poet. Admitting the imitation, the passage, I think, will assume a new beauty, and acquire an illustration that it wants.

Quid referam———
———quos oceano propior gerit India lucos,
Extremi sinus orbis? ubi aëra vincere summum
Arboris haud ullæ jactu potuêre sagittæ?
GEORG. ii. 118.

Say, shall I mark what woods gigantic wave
O'er Indian seas, that earth's last bound'ry lave,
Where the spent shaft, from skilful Indians sped,
Turns e'er it strikes the tree's aërial head?
SOTHEBY.

Præterea, spatium summaï totius omne
Undique si inclusum certis consisteret oris,
Finitumque foret; jam copia materiaï
Undique ponderibus solidis confluxet ad imum;
Nec res ulla geri sub cœli tegmine posset;
Nec foret omnino cœlum, neque lumina solis:
Quippe, ubi materies omnis cumulata jaceret
Ex infinito jam tempore, subsidendo.
At nunc nimirum requies data principiorum
Corporibus nulla est; quia nihil est funditus imum,
Quo quasi confluere, et sedes ubi ponere, possint:
Semper in adsiduo motu res quæque geruntur
Partibus in cunctis, infernaque subpeditantur,
Ex infinito cita, corpora materiaï.

Postremo, ante oculos res rem finire videtur:
Aër dissæpit colleis, atque aëra montes;
Terra mare, et contra mare terras terminat omneis:
Omne quidem vero nihil est quod finiat extra.
Est igitur natura loci, spatiumque profundi,
Quod neque clara suo percurrere flumina cursu

---

Ver. 1061. *From age to age resplendent lightnings urge,*] The whole passage is inimitably beautiful, both as to sublimity of thought, and splendour of diction. The context will apply with equal propriety to *flumina*, *fulmina*, or *lumina*, "rivers, lightnings, or light:" and different editions give us each of these readings. Mr. Wakefield has chosen the first: this I have rejected, however, for the second, which is that adopted by Havercamp, from an old Gottenburg fragment of much celebrity among the critics; and is supported by a Cambridge copy, and one of the codices preserved in the British Musæum. It affords,

Were, too, th' ENTIRE of nature thus confin'd,
Thus circumscrib'd precise, from its own weight
Long since, all matter to th' extremest depth
Had sunk supine: nor aught, the skies beneath,
Nor skies themselves, with countless stars adorn'd
And sun's unsuffering splendour, had remain'd.
Down, down th' accumulated mass had fall'n
From earliest time, devoid of power to rise.
But nought of rest supine material seeds
Evince through nature; since no depth exists
Extreme, and fathomable where those seeds
Might fix collected in inert repose.
All, all is action: the vast whole alike
Moves in each part; and, from material seeds,
Draws, undiminish'd, its eternal food.

Things, to the sense, are circumscrib'd by things.
Air bounds the hills, and hills the liquid air:
Earth ocean, ocean earth: but the vast whole
What fancied scene can bound? O'er its broad realm,
Immeasur'd, and immeasurably spread,
From age to age resplendent lightnings urge,

---

moreover, by far the sublimest idea of any of the lections. Creech, in his English version, has adopted the same rendering; but in his edition of the original, has exchanged it for the more feeble expression *flumina*, or *rivers*. Bruno long ago conjectured, that the planets, and systems of planets, dispersed through the immensity of space, are infinite. Huygens, that there may be fixed stars at such a distance from our solar system, as that their light should not have had time to reach us even from the creation of the world to the present period. Our own picturesque and elegant bard, Akenside, in his Pleasures of Imagina-

Perpetuo possint ævi labentia tractu;
Nec prorsum facere, ut restet minus ire, meando:
Usque adeo passim patet ingens copia rebus,
Finibus exemptis, in cunctas undique parteis.
Ipsa modum porro sibi rerum summa parare
Ne possit, natura tenet: quia corpus inani,
Et, quod inane autem est, finiri corpore cogit;
Ut sic alternis infinita omnia reddat.
Aut etiam, alterutrum nisi terminet alterum eorum
Simplice naturâ, ut pateat tamen immoderatum;
Nec mare, nec tellus, neque cœli lucida templa,
Nec mortale genus, nec divôm corpora sancta,
Exiguum possent horaï sistere tempus.
Nam, dispulsa suo de cœtu, materiaï

---

tion, has a sublime and beautiful passage, founded, as he tells us himself, upon this opinion of Huygens: but which, I should otherwise have thought, deduced immediately from Lucretius; and that he had been acquainted with the reading of the Leyden copy, which gives *lumina*, "light," and had purposely employed it. From Huygens he supposes that there may exist, b. i.

——fields of radiance, whose unfading light,
Has travell'd the profound six thousand years,
Nor yet arriv'd in sight of mortal things.

Lucretius, admitting the lection of the Leyden copy, tells us, on the subject of space, that

———o'er its broad realms
Immeasured, and immeasurably spread,
*From age to age resplendent light* propels,
In vain, its flight perpetual; distant still
And ever distant from the verge of things.

Cowley has a strong and sublime idea, in some measure approaching this of Lucretius and Akenside, in his Davideis; and which Johnson has inserted in his Life, as an instance of vigorous conception.

He is descanting on the kingdom of the Messiah:

Round the whole world his dreaded name shall sound,
And *reach to worlds that must not yet be found.*

Such are the casual resemblances, the parallel scintillations of men of bold and energetic genius.

Ver. 1068. Void *must perforce bound* matter, matter void;] This additional argument adduced against the Stoics, who denied the infinity of matter, although they allowed the infinity of space in which

In vain their flight perpetual; distant, still,
And ever distant from the verge of things.
So vast the space on opening space that swells,
Through every part so infinite alike.
Ask thy own reason. It will prove at once
Th' ENTIRE of nature never can have bounds.
VOID must perforce bound MATTER, MATTER VOID;
Thus, mutual, one illimitable whole
Forming for ever. For were each of each
Free and unshackl'd, uncombin'd, and pure
In their own essence, not one short-liv'd hour
Could earth, or ocean, the refulgent fane
Of heav'n sublime, or mortal forms, or those
The gods themselves inhabit, then subsist.
Freed from all order, disarrang'd, and rude,

---

matter moves, is entirely copied from the writings of Epicurus; and occurs in his Epistle to Herodotus: Ειτε γαρ ην το κενον απειρον, ταδε σωματα ωρισμενα, ουδαμου, ανεμενε τα σωματα, αλλ' εφερετο κατα το απειρον κενον διεσπαρμενα ουκ εχοντα τα υπερειδοντα, τε στελλοντα κατα τας αντικοπα.

Ver. 1073. ——*the refulgent fane*
*Of heav'n sublime*——] Thus Polignac:
——cœli fulgentia templa.
ANTI-LUCR. v. 1331.

The term fane, or temple, as I have before observed, (see note on v. 136,) is applied by our poet to any species of excavation in nature, but more generally to the great concavity of heaven. Milton, in the same manner, in Par. Lost, ix. 667, uses the expression "aerial hall."

Ver. 1074. ——*or mortal forms, or those*
*The gods themselves inhabit,*] The commentator on Creech's translation intimates, that in these verses, which relate to the deities, Lucretius subverts his own system, by supposing them subject to the same dissolution with other component and material bodies.

This is an obvious mistake. Our poet uniformly contends for their immortality. Like Milton, he endows them with a vehicle and figure of existence; but maintains, that they are freed from the law of dissolution, which prevails throughout every terrene substance. He attributes to them also the properties of solidity as well as figure. But were it possible, says he, for substances essentially possessed of these properties to be for one moment destitute of them, then even the gods themselves could subsist no longer, but must submit to the common fate of inferior and material beings.

Copia ferretur magnum per inane, soluta;
Sive adeo potius numquam concreta creasset
Ullam rem, quoniam cogi disjecta nequisset.
Nam certe neque consilio primordia rerum 1020

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Ver. 1080. *For never, doubtless, from result of thought,*] It is surprising to perceive how excessively mistaken all the critics and commentators upon this passage have hitherto been, while nothing, if they had really understood our poet, can be more obvious. All the Grecian schools of philosophy alike maintained the eternity of matter: but they differed as to the mode in which motion, and the present appearances of things first began. Anaximander maintained, that the infinite and primary matter, whence even the gods themselves were formed, was the first intelligent source of all things. The Stoics, not in any respect more philosophic, represented the world as in itself a rational being; and pretended that by the operation of an interior soul or spirit, it had produced and continued to sustain the beauty and order universally exhibited. Such also, with little variation, was the opinion of Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Trismegistus: and Virgil has given us their creed, as the quintessence of wisdom and truth. It is thus Anchises addresses his son:

Principio cœlum, ac terras, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet.
Æneid vi. 724.

Know, first, that heaven and earth's compacted frame,
And flowing waters, and the starry frame,
And both the radiant lights, one common soul
Inspires; and feeds, and animates the whole.
This active mind, infus'd through all the space,
Unites, and mingles with the mighty mass. Dryden.

Plato, indeed, endeavoured, in some measure, to avoid the absurdity which, in a large degree attaches to the rest, but more especially to the Cyrenaics, by supposing, that there was another divinity besides the world itself, by whom the divinity of the world was first put into motion: by conceiving this extrinsic divinity to be both eternal and supreme, and by asserting that the souls of all intelligent and rational beings are created by him, from slips or particles of the divinity of the world, and continue scattered, like cuttings, or seeds of vegetables, through the sun, moon, and planets, ready to unite themselves with the young embryon on its first evincing a principle of vitality. Democritus, however, advanced farther than any of these sects: he not only supposed the world, in its congregate state, to be an animated being, but that many of the elementary atoms themselves were intelligent and percipient in their own simple and uncompounded state; and that the sublime work of creation was produced from the joint counsel and determination of this order, when assembled in a kind of synod; a doctrine which, in modern times, appears, in some measure, to have been supported by Leibnitz and Hobbes, with this simple difference, that whereas Democritus divided his elemental atoms into a percipient and an impercipient class, Hobbes maintained, that no argument could disprove that *all* the atoms of matter were not only endowed with figure, and a capacity of motion, but also with an actual sense or perception; and that they merely require the organs and memory of animals to express their sensations. Scio fuisse philosophos quosdam, eosdemque viros doctos, qui corpora omnia sensu prædita esse sustinuerunt; *nec video*, si natura sensionis in reactione sola collocarentur, *quomodo refutari possint*, &c. Physic. c. xxv. l. 5.

Against all these absurd doctrines and hypotheses, our poet is here entering his rational protest. He tells us, that they are equally made up of incongruities, if not of contradictions:

For, never, doubtless, from result of thought,

Through boundless vacuum the drear mass of things
Would quick be borne: or, rather, nought had ris'n
From the crude chaos, joyless, and inert.
For never, doubtless, from result of thought,
Or mutual compact, could primordial seeds

---

Or mutual compact, could primordial seeds
First harmonize, or move with powers precise.

Who is there, indeed, in the present day, that can suppose they could thus harmonize? And yet, strange to relate! this very passage, including several of the verses that follow, has been adduced against Lucretius, as a proof of unpardonable impiety: and Lactantius has chosen to assert, that "he has hereby reached the utmost point of insanity, and could not possibly go beyond." Implevit, says he, numerum perfectæ insaniæ, ut nihil ulterius adjici possit. De Ira. Such are the unmerited scandals to which our much injured and highly deserving bard has for ages been condemned! Having exposed these opinions of his mistaken antagonists, he adventures to give us his own:—and what is it?

But ever changing, ever chang'd, and vext,
From earliest time, through ever-during space,
With ceaseless repercussion, every mode
Of motion, magnitude, and shape essay'd;
At length th' unwieldy mass the form assum'd
Of things created.

The Mosaic cosmogony itself cannot be more consistent with the existence of a Supreme First Cause. It supposes a chaos; and it supposes the gradual derivation of all things from this chaos, put into motion, and necessarily labouring, *without any intelligence of its own*, for the gradual evolution of all things. On the actual existence of this chaos upon the system of our elaborate poet, see B. vi. of this work, where the whole series of the production of the world is most minutely, and elegantly discussed. But there is no mention here made of any intelligent and extrinsic Being, whom we can conceive as the Eternal First Cause of this motion: true, there is no such mention made, nor do I know that there is any such necessity; it is the physical effect alone we are contemplating, and upon the proofs and principles I have advanced in the prefixed Life of Lucretius, such an intelligent Being is doubtless implied, though he be not immediately adverted to in the passage before us. And with such an implication nothing can be more consistent, more rational, or more pious. Even Des Cartes himself, upon this principle, has rescued, as far as he was able, the character of Epicurus, from every charge of impiety and irrationality. See note on v. 168 of this Book. Of all our modern geologists, Mr. Kirwan has taken most pains to reconcile the theory of Moses with modern discoveries and experiments; or rather, to demonstrate that it is the only true system of geology that a philosopher can, or ought to admit. But Mr. Kirwan himself is under the necessity of conceiving, that many ages elapsed, after the first existence of the earth in a state of chaos, before it was fit for the habitation of animals and vegetables, and that the great work of creation was gradually advancing during the whole of this period of time; in consequence of which, he supposes also, that the days of the Hebrew historian are not to be understood literally, but more comprehensively, and that they comprise so many distinct eras of the events that occurred. The system of geology at present most fashionable in France is that of La Metherie: but La Metherie also supposes the same fact as to the period of creation, and its division into distinct epochs; as he does also, that the world was originally submersed in a primitive ocean, forming hereby an universal and liquid chaos. Many of the positions of La Metherie are opposed by the fanciful Bertrand, in his Nouveaux Principes de Geologie; but even Bertrand himself adheres to this doctrine of the progressive creation or evolution of the earth, as it exists at present.

Ordine se suo quæque sagaci mente locarunt,
Et, quos quæque darent motus, pepigere profecto:
Sed, quia multa, modis multis, mutata, per omne,
Ex infinito, nexantur percita plagis;
Omne genus motus, et cœtus, experiundo,
Tandem deveniunt in taleis disposituras,
Qualibus hæc rerum consistit summa creata:
Et, multos etiam magnos servata per annos,
Ut semel in motus conjecta est convenienteis,
Ecficit, ut largis avidum mare fluminis undis
Integrent amnes, et solis terra vapore
Fota novet fetus; summâ quoque gens animantum
Floreat, et vivant labentes ætheris ignes:
Quod nullo facerent pacto, nisi materiaï
Ex infinito suboriri copia posset,
Unde amissa solent reparare in tempore quoque.
Nam, velutei, privata cibo, natura animantum
Diffluit, amittens corpus; sic omnia debent
Dissolvi, simul ac defecti subpeditare
Materies, aliquâ ratione aversa viaï.
Nec plagæ possunt extrinsecus undique summam
Conservare omnem, quæquomque est conciliata:
Cudere enim crebro possunt, partemque morari,
Dum veniant aliæ, ac subpleri summa queatur;
Interdum resilire tamen coguntur, et unâ

First harmonize, or move with powers precise.
But ever changing, ever chang'd, and vext,
From earliest time, through ever-during space,
With ceaseless repercussion, every mode
Of motion, magnitude, and shape essay'd;
At length th' unweildy mass the form assum'd
Of things created. Persevering, thus,
Through many an age, unnumber'd springs the deep
Feed with perpetual tides: by the warm sun
Sustain'd, and cherish'd, earth renews her fruits,
And man, and beast survive; and ether glows
With living lights innum'rous: scenes throughout
'Twere vain t' expect, from all eternal time,
Had no primordial seeds, in stores immense,
Been ever nigh to renovate the world.
For as, of food depriv'd, the languid frame
Of man must perish, so th' ENTIRE OF THINGS
Must instant cease, should once primordial seeds
Their aid withhold, or deviate in their course.
Nor deem from mutual impulse, things with things
Can sole their forms preserve; th' eternal seeds
May, hence, be oft restrain'd, and e'en purchance,
Their flight delay'd, till, from th' exhaustless store,
Fresh seeds arrive the fainting frame to feed:
But from concussion, frequent, they rebound,

Principiis rerum spatium tempusque fugaï
Largiri, ut possint a cœtu libera ferri.
Quâ re etiam atque etiam suboriri multa necesse est:
Et tamen, ut plagæ quoque possint subpetere ipsæ,
Infinita opus est vis undique materiaï.
Illud in hiis rebus longe fuge credere, Memmi,

Ver. 1112. *But fly, O* Memmius, *fly the sect deceiv'd,*] The Stoics, who uniformly contended for the spherical figure of the earth and planets, contended, at the same time, for the spherical figure of the universe itself; and, indeed, appear to have advanced the spherical figure of the universe as a reason why the stars and planets should partake of a similar configuration; believing that the same kind of gravitation existed through the universe at large, which they contended did exist throughout individual planets; by which the universe was kept in perpetual action, and the earth, and every other orb, was continually tending towards one common centre. When asked how it occurred, allowing this to be a fact, that the particles of earth, water, and air, attracted by such common centre, did not fly off from their own proper orbits, and, passing through the vacuum of space, approach that centre, and rest there, to the total subversion of order, and the regeneration of chaos? they replied, that such would assuredly be the effect, were it not for a certain elastic or contractile power possessed by the atmosphere of every orb, which compresses its particles together, and thus prevents such a dissolution. This atmosphere, or elastic ether, is denominated by Ennius, Virgil, and Manilius, as well as by our own poet, mœnia mundi, or "the walls of the world;" the Stoics believing that the world at large, as well as every orb contained within its circumference, was surrounded by the same elastic substance.

This doctrine of the Stoics was strenuously opposed by the Epicureans, on many accounts. For the latter believed that matter, as well as space, was infinite; and that they had no other limit than what they reciprocally afforded each other. Hence again they denied a central point in the universe; for that which is infinite can have no centre; and of course, they denied the existence of central attraction. But they carried their opposition still farther; and denied, at the same time, that either the earth or the heavenly bodies were perfectly spherical; conceiving the former to approximate gradually, in its lower regions, to the nature of air, on which it rests, and of course, that it is totally destitute of antipodal inhabitants. This doctrine of the Epicureans was assented to for many ages after the epoch of our poet, by sages of the highest reputation, both Christian and anti-christian; among the former of whom, indeed, to entertain a different opinion, was to be guilty of heresy. And, in effect, till the general laws and principles of gravitation were developed and understood, I question whether there were not more reason discovered in denying the perfectly spheroidal figure of the earth, and the possibility of an antipodal habitation, than in contending for such theories. At least, the objections urged against them by our poet, and others of the same school, are extremely forcible, and must, till the discovery of the above general principles, have been unanswerable. Lucretius has endeavoured to prove, that the universe is infinite: but, if this be true, there cannot possibly be a central spot; for that which is infinite can have no centre. Yet, allowing a centre, whether in the universe, or in the earth, what reason can be assigned for the supposition, that bodie press towards such centre, rather than to any other part; and that here, and here alone, they lose the

Dissolve all tie, and leave to transient rest
The common matter whence each substance springs.
Hence must incalculable seeds exist
Ceaseless in act; and the vast whole derive
Alone from boundless matter impulse due.
But fly, O Memmius, fly the sect deceiv'd,

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property of weight and gravitation? Whence comes it to pass, moreover, if it be a general law, that all material bodies must press to such central point, that air and fire oppose this general law, and fly off in stubborn disobedience? more especially, whence proceeds it, that fire should be able to pierce through every stratum of the incumbent and elastic atmosphere itself, and defy its constrictive bond? for such was the opinion of the Stoics, who imagined that the sun, moon, and stars, were fed by this perpetual and lambent pabulum.

These are the questions with which our poet perplexed his adversaries, and the objections he urges to their system. And though a deeper investigation of the laws of nature have, at present, rendered some of his queries nugatory, and afforded us ample means of replying to others; yet the opponents of Lucretius were without these advantages, and do not appear to have been possessed of any power of rebutting the difficulties with which he presses them, or of extricating themselves from the dilemmas into which they must have been perpetually thrown.

The opinion of the Stoics, however, respecting both the universe and the solar system, as to their moving around, and tending towards some common centre, is corroborated by modern observations. The common centre of universal nature, in the opinion of Dr. Herschell, consists of a mass of opake and chaotic matter. Philos. Trans. Vol. LXXXIV. from which he thinks it probable that all the systems of the Universe have been emitted by some strong projectile force, not dissimilar to the sudden explosions which frequently take place in volcanos and earthquakes. See note on b. ii. 1170, and b. v. 425.

This doctrine of the Stoics is of considerable antiquity. Homer alludes to it, and represents the common centre of the universe as the place of punishment for the disobedient deities. Here he fixes his Tartarus, or Hell; and, in the name of Jupiter, denounces to every refractory god, that

——ριψω ες Ταρταρον ηεροεντα
Τηλε μαλ', ηχι βαθιστον υπο χθονος εστι βερεθρον,
Ενθα σιδηρειαι τε πυλαι και χαλκεος ουδος,
Τοσσον ενερθ' αϊδεω οσον ουρανος εστ' απο γαιης. Il. Θ.

——he, far from steep Olympus thrown,
Low in the dark Tartarian *gulf* shall groan;
As deep beneath th' infernal CENTRE hurl'd,
As from that CENTRE to th' etherial world. Pope.

This passage has been imitated by Virgil; but, as a story seldom loses any thing either by report or transcription, the latter has taken care to double the distance between heaven and hell; and in the Æneid it runs thus:

——tum Tartarus ipse
Bis patet in præceps tantum, tenditque sub umbras,
Quantus ad æthereum cœli suspectus Olympum.
Æ. vi. 577.

The gaping gulph low to the centre lies;
And TWICE as deep as earth is distant from the skies. Dryden.

We cannot be surprized, therefore, at Milton's beating both the Greek and Roman poets; and informing us that the regions appointed for Satan were

As far remov'd from God and light of heaven,
As from the centre THRICE to th' utmost Pole.
Par. Lost, i.

In medium summæ, quod dicunt, omnia niti;
Atque ideo mundi naturam stare sine ullis
Ictibus externis, neque quoquam posse resolvi
Summa atque ima, quod in medium sint omnia nixa:
Ipsum si quidquam posse in se sistere credis;
Et, quæ pondera sunt sub terris, omnia sursum
Nitier, in terrâque retro requiescere posta;
Ut per aquas quæ nunc rerum simulacra videmus:
Et simili ratione animalia suppa vagari
Contendunt, neque posse e terris in loca cœli
Recidere inferiora magis, quam corpora nostra
Sponte suâ possint in cœli templa volare:
Illei quom videant solem, nos sidera noctis
Cernere; et alternis nobiscum tempora cœli
Dividere; et nocteis parileis agitare diebus.
Sed vanus stolidis hæc omnia finxerit error,

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How much more simple the awful declaration of our Saviour, in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, Luke, xvi. 26. μεταξυ ἡμων και υμων χασμα μεγα ἐστηρικται, ὁπως οἱ θελοντες διαϐηναι ἐντευθεν προς ὑμας, μη δυνωνται, μηδε οἱ ἐκειθεν προς ἡμας διαπερωσιν. "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence."

Ver. 1128. ——*by them the sun,*
*When night to us unfolds his stars, survey'd;*] This opinion of the Stoic philosophers, together with some doubts respecting its truth, is referred to by Virgil, in his first Georgic. He is speaking of the antipodal regions.

Illuc, ut perhibent, aut intempesta silet nox
Semper, et obtentâ densantur nocte tenebræ;

Who teach that things, with gravitation firm,
To the vast centre of th' ENTIRE, alike,
Unerring press: the world who fain would prove
Void of external impulse, may subsist,
And nought its post desert, profound, or high,
Since of such gravitating power possest.
For can'st thou deem that aught may thus sustain,
And poise itself? that aught of solid weight,
Plac'd at earth's utmost depth, could upwards strive
Revers'd; and to the surface—(in the stream
As spreads the downward shadow)—still adhere?
For thus such sages hold: thus man, and beast
Subsist, they teach, inverted, earth beneath:
From their firm station, down their deeper skies
As unexpos'd to fall, as towards the heav'ns
Ourselves to mount sublime: by them the sun,
When night to us unfolds his stars, survey'd;
And equal measuring, in alternate course,
With us, their months, their darkness, and their day.
Such are the specious fancies error feigns,

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Aut redit a nobis Aurora, diemque reducit;
Nosque ubi primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis,
Illic sera rubens accendit lumina vesper.

v. 247.

There night, eternal night, and silence sleep,
And gathering darkness broods upon the deep;
Or from our clime, when fades the orient ray,
There bright Aurora beams eternal day;
And when above Sol's fiery coursers glow,
Late Vesper lights his evening star below.
SOTHEBY.

Ver. 1132. *Such are the specious fancies error feigns,*
*In idle hour, to minds perverse and vain.*] It is truly astonishing to behold the obloquy and contempt which men of enlightened understandings, of taste

Amplexei quod habent perverse prima viaï.
Nam medium nihil esse potest, ubi inane locusque
Infinita: neque omnino, si jam medium sit,
Possit ibei quidquam hac potius consistere caussâ,
Quam quâ vis aliâ longe regione manere.
Omnis enim locus, ac spatium, quod inane vocamus,
Per medium, per non medium, concedat oportet
Æquis ponderibus, motus quaquomque feruntur.
Nec quisquam locus est, quo corpora quom venere,
Ponderis amissâ vi, possint stare in inani:
Nec, quod inane autem est, ulli subsistere debet,
Quin, sua quod natura petit, concedere pergat:
Haud igitur possunt tali ratione teneri
Res in concilium, medii cupedine victæ.

---

and elegance will frequently cast upon those who differ from them in opinion, and merely on account of such difference. According to the discoveries of modern, and more accurate philosophy, the opponents of Lucretius were, in the present instance, much nearer the truth than himself. But they had imbibed a contrary system to his own; and what follows? the system they had imbibed must be false and fanciful, and they had only imbibed it from vanity or perversity of mind. How much is it to be lamented that men, in other respects most liberal and praise-worthy, should so frequently indulge in reflections so uncharitable and disingenuous, upon subjects of but speculative consideration alone; and thus discover, where we should least expect to find it, so large a portion of the pride and rancour of the human heart?

But what was merely deemed idle, extravagant, or perverse, in the days of Lucretius, on the introduction of the Christian religion, and for many centuries afterwards, was regarded as a high crime and heresy: and the punishment of imprisonment, confiscation, and death, was scarcely severe enough to atone for the diabolical dogma. In the note on Book ii. v. 1065, I have stated with what terror Copernicus at length consented to disclose to a few friends the principles of that system which is now universally accredited throughout Christendom, after having concealed it from public notice for at least thirty years. Yet so much did he dread a prosecution for heresy, even after he had divulged it, that it is generally believed he fell a sacrifice to this apprehension alone. For asserting the same system, to wit, that the sun is in the centre, and not the earth; and that the latter has a diurnal motion, and is inhabited in its antipodal regions, Galileo was im-

In idle hour, to minds perverse and vain.
Where all is infinite, what spot precise
Can e'er be central? or were centre own'd,
Why towards such spot should matter rather tend,
Than elsewhere more remote, and deeper still?
For vacant space, through every part alike,
Central or not, must yield to things compact,
And pond'rous, as their varying weight compels;
Nor through the boundless VOID one point exists
Where things may rest, as if of weight depriv'd.
No power it boasts t' uphold; but still recedes,
As nature prompts, and opes the needed path.
Hence, by the love alone of centre struck,
Th' harmonious frame of things could ne'er be form'd.

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prisoned even so late as the days of Milton, who visited him in his confinement: his works were publicly burnt, and he was at length only released upon making a public recantation, and submitting to the penance of repeating once a week, for three years, the seven penitential psalms. Virgilius, bishop of Saltzburg, during the papacy of Zachary, was reduced to the same dilemma; and when Boniface, archbishop of Mentz, accused him of maintaining the erroneous and blasphemous doctrine of the antipodes, this enlightened head of the church ordained, that if he should be convicted of holding so abominable an error, which he had uttered against the Lord, and against his own soul, that there are other worlds, other men under the earth, other suns, and other moons, a consistory immediately be convened; that he be degraded from the honour of the priesthood, and be excommunicated from the church. It was, indeed, the same principle that condemned, in our own country, that first, and most indefatigable philosopher of his age, Roger Bacon, to an imprisonment for ten years; his chemical discoveries being attributed to dealings with the Devil. During the zenith of the papal power, there are but few instances to be traced of a successful opposition to such frivolous and superstitious tenets as philosophy then exhibited: but I ought not to forget that of Ferdinand of Spain, who, on the offer of Columbus to engage in a voyage into the southern hemisphere in quest of the antipodes, instead of imprisoning him for heresy of doctrine, although opposed by the decrees of the church, by the opinion of the Christian fathers, and of all his own ecclesiastical councillors, adopted the belief of the enterprising navigator, and shortly afterwards reaped an ample reward for his liberality and strength of mind.

Præterea, quoniam non omnia corpora fingunt
In medium niti; sed terrarum, atque liquores,
Humorum ponti, magnasque e montibus undas,
Et quasi terreno quæ corpore contineantur:
At contra tenueis exponunt aëris auras,
Et calidos simul a medio differrier igneis;
Atque ideo totum circum tremere æthera signis,
Et solis flammam per cœli cærula pasci,
Quod calor, a medio fugiens, ibi conligat omnis:
[Quippe etiam vesci e terrâ mortalia secla;]
Nec prorsum arboribus summos frundescere ramos
Posse, nisi a terris paullatim quoique cibatum
Terra det: at supra circum tegere omnia cœlum;
Ne, volucri ritu flammarum, mœnia mundi
Diffugiant subito magnum per inane, soluta;
Et, ne cætera consimili ratione sequantur:
Neve ruant cœli tonitralia templa superne,

---

Ver. 1160. *And all envelop'd, volatile as flame,*
*Burst every bond, and dissipate, and die:*] It is impossible to peruse this sublime and exquisite passage of Lucretius, without recalling to memory a passage of well-known, and equal sublimity in Shakspeare; and though I dare not assert that the latter was indebted for the idea to the former, yet, in the prosecution of this poem, the reader will meet with sentences and sentiments so strikingly parallel, particularly in b. v. and vi. that he will be disposed to attribute more learning to the English bard than has generally been conceded to him, and believe him to have been no stranger to Lucretius:

——the great globe itself,
Yea, all, which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.

Language cannot easily convey a stronger picture of utter extinction, than either of the above images. Lucretius tells us, that the whole would "fly off, volatile as flame:"—Shakspeare, "as an insubstantial pageant," or "vision:"—Lucretius, "that it would dissipate, or utterly vanish away:"—Shakspeare, that

Moreo'er such sages urge not that the whole
Strives towards the centre equal; but terrene
Alone, and fluid matters; the deep main,
The mountain cat'ract, and the forms produc'd
From earth Dedalian: while the breezy air,
And the light flame, far from such centre stray,
Through ether trembling, and, with lambent fire,
Feeding, through time, the sun's refulgent blaze;
As feeds maternal earth the myriad forms
Of herbs, and trees, and animated life,
From her own bosom nurtur'd, and sustain'd.
Thus, too, they teach that heav'n, with bound sublime,
Encircles all things, lest the world's wide walls,
And all envelop'd, volatile as flame,
Burst every bond, and dissipate, and die:
Lest heav'n in thunders perish, and below
The baseless earth forsake us, downward urg'd:

---

it would "dissolve, without leaving a rack behind;" without the slightest vestige of its evanescent existence. Mr. Wakefield, however, with his usual acumen, has traced out a similar image, and one of equal grandeur and sublimity, in the Apocalypse, cap. xx. 11. Και ειδον θρονον λευκον μεγαν, και τον καθημενον επ' αυτου· ὐ απο προσωπου ΕΦΥΓΕΝ ἡ γη, και Ὁ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΣ και τοπος ουχ ευρεθη αυτοις. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it; *from whose presence the earth and the heavens vanished away, and no place could be found for them.*"

An idea not foreign from either of the above, but more immediately parallel with ver. 1165, and 1166, occurs in the following passage of Klopstock's Messiah, in which he gives a terribly sublime picture of the descent of the Almighty, and the final judgment of mankind:

——Er ruhet
Hoch auf Tabor, und hält den tiefer zitternden erdkreis
Dass der staub nicht vor ihm in das Unermessliche stäube. Gesck. v.

High rested he o'er Tabor, and *the globe*
*Deep-trembling, held; or all its mighty mass*
*Had crumbled at the sight through space profound.*

Terraque se pedibus raptim subducat; et omnes,
Inter permixtas rerum cœlique ruinas,
Corpora solventes, abeant per inane profundum;
Temporis ut puncto nihil exstet reliquiarum,
Desertum præter spatium, et primordia cæca.
Nam, quaquomque prius de parti corpora deesse
Constitues, hæc rebus erit pars janua læti:
Hac se turba foras dabit omnis materiaï.
Hæc si pernosces, parvâ perductus opellâ;
Namque alid ex alio clarescet; nec tibi cæca
Nox iter eripiet, quin ultima naturaï
Pervideas: ita res adcendent lumina rebus.

Ver. 1170. ——*the doors of death are ope,*] Thus Virgil:

——patet isti janua leto.
Æn. ii. 661.

——the door of Death stands open.

So in the tremendously grand, and highly figurative address of the Almighty to the patriarch Job, xxxviii. 17.

And loose, and lifeless, man's dissev'ring frame,
Mixt with the rushing wreck of earth, and skies,
Waste through all space profound; till nought remain,
Nought, in a moment, of all now survey'd,
But one blank VOID, one mass of seeds inert.
For once to act, when primal atoms fail,
Fail where they may, the doors of death are ope,
And the vast whole unbounded ruin whelms.
These subjects if, with trivial toil, thou scan,
Each, each illuming, midnight shall no more
Thy path obstruct; but nature's utmost depths
Shine as the day: so things irradiate things.

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הנגלו לך שערי מות
ושערי צלמות תראה

Have the doors of Death been disclosed to thee?
The doors of the shadow of Death hast thou beheld?

THE

# NATURE OF THINGS.

## BOOK THE SECOND.

## ARGUMENT.

THE Poet describes the pleasures that result from the study of philosophy, and a mind satisfied with a little, and estranged from the passions and pursuits of the busy world. He then resumes his subject, and attempts to prove a perpetual motion in primordial atoms; and that this motion is of various kinds, direct, curvilinear, and repercussive. He asserts, that primordial atoms are not all of the same figure; some being globular, others polygonal, and others jagged: that these figures vary not to infinitude; but that the atoms under every separate figure are infinite in number. The formation of compound bodies from the combination of atoms of different figures, and the variation of their solidity or fluidity, their roughness or rotundity, from the different atoms of which they are compounded; and the degree of force and affinity, or connexion with which they adhere to each other. Prismatic hues, and their origin; refraction of colours, and its cause. Neither these, nor any other qualities of bodies, reside in primordial atoms themselves, but only in their peculiar arrangements and combinations. The origin of irritability, sensation, and apprehension: the immensity of creation, from the immensity of its materials—and, consequently, the existence of other systems, and systems of systems of worlds. No compound material being eternal—whence no system of material atoms can be eternal; and whence, again, the progression, senescence, and decay of every existing world, the ruins, or disorganised corpuscles of which will be employed in the generation and maturity of other worlds. Proofs, that the earth is already in a state of decline and comparative infertility; and hence, that it must, eventually, perish from senility alone.

# *DE RERUM NATURA.*

## LIBER SECUNDUS.

SUAVE, mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terrâ magnum alterius spectare laborem :
Non, quia vexari quemquam est jocunda voluptas,
Sed, quibus ipse malis careas, quia cernere suave est.
Per campos instructa, tuâ sine parte pericli,

---

Ver. 1. *How sweet to stand, when tempests tear the main,*] Nothing truly valuable is to be acquired without severe application and labour. The pursuit of riches, honours, or fame, demands incessant exertion, and is accompanied with perpetual anxiety; an anxiety that frequently poisons every enjoyment, and too dearly purchases the object of our toils, even if it be purchased at last. But the pursuit of knowledge differs essentially from every other exertion: it, too, has its difficulties and its labours, its briars to clear away, and its precipices to surmount: but its path is free from anxiety and disappointment; and the man who gains possession of its summit, feels himself elevated above the world, and may well look with pity on the crowds that are struggling below him. Impressed with this sentiment, our poet opens the book before us: and the beauty and elegance of his imagery have produced a host of imitators; not one of whom, however, to the best of my knowledge, has, by any means, equalled himself. For the idea contained in the first two verses Lucretius, however, seems, in some measure, to have been indebted to Isidorus. "Nothing is more pleasant," says this writer, "than to sit at ease in the harbour, and behold the shipwreck of others:" εν λιμενι καθησθαι, και τα των αλλων σκοπειν ναυαγια.—Pelus. Lib. ii. Ep. 240. The following description of Akenside will here perhaps arise in the mind of every reader; and it is not unlikely that Lucretius was the original from which he drew: we have already traced him occasionally turning his eye to the poem before us:

——ask the crowd
Which flies impatient from the village walk,
*To climb the neighb'ring cliffs*, when far below
The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coast
Some hapless bark: while sacred Pity melts
The general eye, or Terror's icy hand
Smites their distorted limbs, and horrent hair:
While every mother closer to her breast

# *THE NATURE OF THINGS.*

## BOOK THE SECOND.

How sweet to stand, when tempests tear the main,
On the firm cliff, and mark the seaman's toil!
Not that another's danger soothes the soul,
But from such toil how sweet to feel secure!
How sweet, at distance from the strife, to view

---

Catches her child; and pointing where the waves
Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud.
PLEAS. OF IMAG.

Whether, however, this picture were, or were not, derived from the Nature of Things, there can be little doubt that Dryden, who was much better acquainted with Lucretius than Akenside, and had translated a variety of detached parts of his work, intended the following as an express copy:

No happiness can be where is no rest:
Th' unknown, untalk'd-of man is only blest:
He, as in some safe cell, his cliff does keep,
From thence he views the labours of the deep:
The gold-fraught vessel, which mad tempests beat,
He sees how vainly make to his retreat:
And when from far the tenth wave does appear
Shrinks up in silent joy that he's not there.
TYRAN. LOVE.

Beattie has caught the same idea, and introduced it, with his accustomed elegance, into his Minstrel:

And oft the *craggy cliff* he lov'd to *climb*,
When all in mist the world below was lost.
What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
And view th' enormous waste of water tost
In billows length'ning to th' horizon round,
Now scoop'd in gulfs, with mountains now emboss'd.
B. i. 21.

But perhaps the figure is nowhere better preserved than in the following lines from an old song, quoted by B. Johnson in "Every one out of Humour:"

I wander not to seek for more:
In greatest storm I sit on shore,
And laugh at those that toil in vain
To get what must be lost again.

Ver. 5. *How sweet, at distance from the strife, to view*] Nothing was more common, before the invention of the science of artillery, than for persons

Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri :
Sed nihil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere,
Edita doctrinâ sapientum, templa serena ;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ ;
Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,
Nocteis atque dies niti præstante labore
Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri.
O miseras hominum menteis ! o pectora cæca !

---

who, from the importance of their station, were not allowed to be actively engaged in the battle, to mark its progress from the summit of some neighbouring hill ; a post, however, which, from the nature of modern tactics, would be no longer free from danger, nor, from the volumes of smoke with which the combatants are covered, competent to a survey of what is transacting. It was from a windmill, on such an eminence as this, that Edward III. surveyed the heroic exploits of the Black Prince in the celebrated battle of Cresсy : and Seneca, in his Troas, has a reference to a similar fact :

Est una magna *turris* e Trojâ super
Adsueta Priamo ; cujus *e fastigio*
Summisque *pinnis*, arbiter belli *sedens*
Regebat acies : turre in hac, blando sinu
Fovens nepotem, cum metu, versos, gravi,
Danaos fugaret Hector et ferro et face,
Paterna puero *bella monstrabat* senex.

Sought oft by Priam, swells a spacious tower
High from the Trojan walls ; o'er whose bold cope
Whose ramparts seated, arbiter of fate,
He rul'd the fight : here to his fost'ring breast
Straining his grandson, while with fire and sword
Victorious Hector chas'd th' affrighted Greeks
He show'd the boy where former fields were fought.

Not widely different, Cicero in the following passage to Atticus :

Nunc vero, cum cogar exire de navi, non abjectis, sed receptis gubernaculis, cupio istorum naufragia ex terra intueri ; cupio ut ait amicus tuus Sophocles,

——και ὑπο στεγῃ
Πυκνας ακουειν ↓εκαδος ἐυδουση φρενι. Ep. l. ii. 7.

" But now that I am compelled to quit the vessel not with lost, but recovered tackle, I wish to behold these shipwrecks from the strand ; I wish, as says thy friend Sophocles,

——from a cliff to hear
The dashing spray swell frequent o'er the soul.

Ver. 7. *But sweeter far on Wisdom's heights serene,*
*To watch the giddy crowd that, deep below,*
*For ever wander*, &c.——] Ovid is under many obligations to Lucretius ; and the following extract, borrowed from the passage before us, is an instance in point :

——juvat ire per alta
Astra : juvat, terris et inerti sede relictis,
Nube vehi, validique humeris insistere Atlantis ;
Palentesque animos passim, ac rationis egentes,
Despectare procul. Met. xv. 147.

'Tis pleasant mid the stars to soar sublime ;
Pleasant, from earth, and earth's gross region freed,

Contending hosts, and hear the clash of war!
But sweeter far on Wisdom's heights serene,
Upheld by Truth, to fix our firm abode;
To watch the giddy crowd that, deep below,
For ever wander in pursuit of bliss;
To mark the strife for honours, and renown,
For wit and wealth, insatiate, ceaseless urg'd,
Day after day, with labour unrestrain'd.
O wretched mortals!—race perverse and blind!

---

Wrapt in a cloud, on Atlas propt secure,
To watch far off, the busy throng that toil,
Bereft of reason.

To the same effect, and from the same source, the pensive Muse of Cowper:

*'Tis pleasant* through the loop-holes of retreat
To peep at such a world. To see the stir
Of the great Babel, and *not feel the crowd.*
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates
*At a safe distance,* where the dying sound
Falls a soft murmur on th' uninjur'd ear.
Thus sitting, and *surveying thus at ease,*
The globe and its concerns, *I seem advanc'd*
*To some secure, and more than mortal height.* Task.

Statius has, therefore, compared to the sage himself this secure and elevated cliff, on which Lucretius and Cowper represent him as seated:

Stat sublimis apex, ventosque imbresque serenus
Despicit. Theb. ii. 35.

Firm stands its brow sublime, and winds and showers
Despises, fearless.

It is highly probable that from this passage of Statius Goldsmith derived his beautiful and parallel simile; which, in reality, is little more than a free translation:

As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its head the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sun-shine settles on its head.
Deserted Village.

Mr. Sotheby, in his version of Wieland's Oberon, has given us the same idea, almost in the same words:

Sublimely rais'd to Heaven, his brow appears
The shrine of peace; and like a sun-gilt height,
Where never earthly mist obscur'd the light,
Above the stormy world, its tranquil summit rears. Cant. viii.

The beauty of this description is, however, the translator's own: for the rendering is so wide of the original that it is barely possible to trace the clue. In Wieland it occurs as follows:

——verschlossen der begier,
Von keiner furcht, von keinem schmerz betroffen,
Ist nur dem wahrem noch die heitre seele offen,
Nur offen der natur, und reingestimmt zu ihr.

Ver. 11. *To mark the strife for honours, and renown,*
*For wit and wealth, insatiate——*] In a similar manner, Denham describes the various pursuits of our own metropolis, from the brow of Cooper's Hill:

Its state and wealth, its business and its crowd,
Seem, at this distance, but a darker cloud;
And is, to him who rightly things esteems,
No other in effect than what it seems.

Qualibus in tenebris vitæ, quantisque periclis,
Degitur hocc' ævi, quodquomque est! Nonne videre est,
Nihil aliud sibi naturam latrare, nisi ut, quoi
Corpore sejunctus dolor absit, mente fruatur
Jocundo sensu, curâ semota, metuque?
Ergo corpoream ad naturam pauca videmus
Esse opus omnino, quæ demant quomque dolorem;

Ver. 16. ——*know ye not*

*Of all ye toil for nature nothing asks*] Never have the practice or the precepts of any philosopher been more misrepresented and libelled than those of Epicurus. Indolence, and mere animal gratification, have been generally supposed to constitute the result of all his lessons, and the characteristic of all his philosophy. A life of indolence, however, could never have given either Epicurus, or Lucretius, that truly wonderful extent of knowledge, that deep research into the most curious phænomena of nature, and that power of argumentatively elucidating their own doctrines from facts, and, for the most part, from facts alone, which are to be traced in almost every page of this inimitable poem. And as to their corporeal pleasures let the passage before us speak, a passage perfectly consonant with the general precepts and practice of their system, and in which we meet with a rigid, and almost anchorite abjuration of every thing the world calls gratification or indulgence. In reality, the pleasures pursued and recommended by Epicurus were entirely of the negative kind: pleasures easily procured, and almost in every instance devoid of mutability. Solomon himself was never more convinced of the vanity of all earthly pursuits and enjoyments than the Grecian moralist; nor does the Christian system inculcate a greater purity of life and manners. "Happiness," observes the philosopher, and it is to this passage Lucretius refers, "is the end of our being: but to be happy, we must be free from all pain of body; and from all trouble and vexation of mind; every thing actually required by nature is easily obtained, and that only is obtained with difficulty which is beyond her wants: we hence call competency our chief good." Ηδονην τελος ὑπαρχειν'—το μητε αλγειν το σωμα μητε ταραττεσθαι την ψυχην'—το μεν φυσικον παν ευπορισ̣τον εστι, το δε κενον δυσπορισ̣τον'—την αυταρκειαν αγαθον μεγα νομιξομεν.

I agree with Mr. Hume that Tasso had the exordium of the present Book strongly in his eye when he composed the fascinating address of the fair phantom, in Armida's garden, to Rinaldo; but I cannot, with him, admit that this Address contains *all* the spirit of the Epicurean system. The passage is as follows:

O giovinetti, mentre Aprili, e Maggio
V' ammantan di fiorite, e verde spoglie;
Di gloria o di virtù fallace raggio
La tenerella mente ah non v' invoglie.
Solo chi segue ciò, che piace è saggio,
E in sua stagion degli anni il frutto coglie,
Questo grida natura; or dunque voi
Indurerete l'alma ai detti suoi?

Folli perchè gettate il caro dono,
Che breve è sì, di vostra età novella?
Nomi senza foggetto, idoli sono
Ciò che pregio, e valore il mondo appella.
La fama, che invaghisce a un dolce suono
Voi superbi mortali, e par sì bella,
E' un eco, un sogno, anzi del sogno un' ombra,
Ch' ad ogni vento si dilegna, e sgombra.

Goda il corpo sicuro, e in lieti oggetti
L' alma tranquilla appaghi i sensi frali;

Through what dread dark, what perilous pursuits
Pass ye this round of being!—know ye not
Of all ye toil for nature nothing asks
But for the body freedom from disease,
And sweet, unanxious quiet, for the mind?
And little claims the body to be sound:
But little serves to strew the paths we tread

---

Oblii le noje andate, e non affretti
Le sue miserie in aspettando i mali.
Nulla curi, se'l ciel tuoni o saetti;
Minacci egli a sua voglia, e infiammi strali.
Questo è saper, questa è felice vita:
Sì l'insegna natura, e sì l' addita.

Cant. xiv. 62.

O happy man! when youth reigns o'er your hours,
And strews the paths of life with smiling flowers.
Ah! let not virtue, with fallacious ray,
Or glory lead your tender mind astray.
Who learns the fruits, each season yields, to prize,
Who follows pleasure, he alone is wise.
Know, this is Nature's voice! will you withstand
Her sacred laws, and slight her high command?
Insensate he who wastes his bloomy prime,
Nor tastes the transient gifts of fleeting time.
Whate'er the world may worth or valour deem,
Is but a phantom, and delusive dream:
Say what is fame, that idol of the brave!
Whose charms can thus deceiv'd mankind enslave?
An echo—or a shade—to none confin'd,
A shifting cloud dispers'd with ev'ry wind!
Then rest secure; in every offer'd joy
Indulge your senses, and your soul employ.
Past woes forget; nor antedate your doom
By vain presage of evils yet to come.
Let thunders roll, and nimble light'nings fly;
Yet heed not you the threat'nings of the sky.
This, this is wisdom; hence each blessing flows:
This Nature bids, and this the path she shows.

Hoole.

Ver. 20. *And little claims the body to be sound:*
*But little serves*——] Hence perhaps Young in his Night Thoughts:

Man wants but little, nor that little long.

An idea obviously caught by Goldsmith, and transplanted, in the form of the following couplet, into his Edwin and Angelina:

Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long.

No man more fully exemplified this axiom of temperate philosophy than Epicurus himself, as I have already remarked in the prefixed life of our poet; and hence the following epigram of Athenæus:

Ανθρωποι μοχθειτε τι χειρονα, και δια κερδος
Απληστον νεικων αρχετε και πολεμων;
Τας φυσιος δ' ο πλουτος; ορος τις βαιον επισχει
Αι δε κεναι κρισιες, των απερανταν εδυν·
Τουτο Νεοκλεος πλουτει τεκνον, η παρα Μουσαν
Εκλυεν, η Πυθους εξ ιερας τριποδων.

Diog. Laert. x.

O why this impious toil! this lust of gain
That ever teems with turbulence and smart!
The little Nature needs we soon obtain,
But nought can glut the avaricious heart.
This, first of sages, Epicurus taught,
Fir'd by the Muse, or from the tripod fraught.

Delicias quoque utei multas substernere possint ;
Gratius interdum neque Natura ipsa requirit :

---

A similar remark recurs in many other parts of the present poem, but particularly in b. v. v. 1139.

Yet truest riches—would mankind their breasts
Bend to the study, in a little lie,
With mind well pois'd: here want can never come.

The idea is indeed common to moralists in every age and nation. Thus Horace :

Jure perhorrui
Late conspicuum tollere verticem—
——Bene est, cui Deus obtulit
Parcâ, quod satis est, manu.

Well have I shunn'd to rear my brows
Mid scenes of pomp and care :
For happiest he whom God allows
Enough, though nought to spare.

So the Hebrew sage, Prov. xxx. 8.

ראש ועשר אלת - תן לי
הטריפני לחם חקי

Give me neither poverty nor riches ;
Feed me with food convenient for me.

Ver. 23. *What, though the dome be wanting, whose proud walls*] The description is as true to historic fact, as it is exquisite in poetic embellishment. The Roman Patricians, in the magnificence of their palaces, were at this time exhibiting all the splendour of the East. Their vaulted ceilings, and in many cases, the whole interior of their walls, were either overlaid with gold or ivory, or inlaid with a mosaic of both. Even the outermost courts or vestibules in Cleopatra's palace, as we learn from Lucan, were lined with the latter, Phars. x. 119 ; while Nero, as Suetonius informs us, (in Nerone, c. 31) preferred the former, and overlaid his palace with sheet-gold alone. It is to the mosaic, or alternate inlay of the two, that Horace refers, in the following verses :

Non *ebur*, neque *aureum*
Mea renidet in domo *lacunar*. lib. 18.

Nor *ivory*, nor *golden* dome
Blazes around my humble home.

The palace of Menelaus is represented by Homer as having been more curiously tesselated still, and having been equally irradiated,

Χρυσου τ', ηλεκτρου τε, και αργυρου, η δ' ελεφαντος.
Od. Δ. 72.

With amber, silver, ivory, and gold.

To these the luxurious Orientalists added sapphires, beryls, and other precious stones, of which the sapphire appears to have been most in favour; and was intended, in the swelling vault of the ceiling, to imitate, by the introduction of silver stars, the appearance of the heavens at midnight. The Hebrews were accustomed to this magnificent architecture; and the superb and splendid descriptions of the throne of the Almighty, in Ezekiel and the Apocalypse, obviously allude to it. In like manner we are told, Exod. xxiv. 10, that when God visibly manifested himself to Moses and the elders of Israel, "they saw, as it were, under his feet a paved (or tessalated) work of sapphire stones, and the clear azure vault of the heavens."

Thus, the Persian poet Sadi, in his book of apophthegms, describing the sky itself :

نکه کن برین کنبد زر بکار
که شقشق بودي استون
الستوار
سرا پردهٔ چرغ کردنره بین
در و شمعها مي فروز نده بيي

Behold this *dome*, with *gold* profusely vein'd !
This *massy roof with pillars unsustain'd !*
This *vast pavillion* of the rolling sphere !
These azure *lamps*, that burn for ever clear !

The description before us is, however, in all pro-

With joys beyond e'en Nature's utmost wish.
What, though the dome be wanting, whose proud walls

---

bability, taken immediately from Homer's picture of the palace of Alcinous, beginning

Χρυσειοι δ' αρα κουροι, ευδμητων επι βωμων, &c.

Od. H. v. 100.

The front appear'd, with radiant splendors gay,
Bright as the lamp of night, or orb of day.
The walls were massy brass: the cornice high
Blue metals crown'd in colours of the sky;—
Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,
Which boys of gold, with flaming torches, crown'd.
The polish'd ore, reflecting every ray,
Blaz'd on the banquets with a double day.

Pope.

Yet the philosophic moral, in which consists the chief beauty of the description, is altogether our poet's own: and Virgil has not been inattentive to so rich a treasure. In the second book of his Georgics, he has therefore introduced a passage, obviously referring to this of Lucretius, and extending to a length too considerable for insertion in this note. It begins at ver. 461.

Si non ingentem foribus domus alta superbis
Mane salutantum totis vomit ædibus undam—
At secura quies, et nescia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum; *at latis otia fundis,*
*Speluncæ, vivi*que *lacus*; *at frigida Tempe,* &c.

Thomson is under an equal and similar obligation to our poet: though the parallel passage in Thomson is rather a more exact transcript of Virgil than of Lucretius. I refer to his description of the happiness of a rural life in his Autumn, in which we find the following lines:

What, tho' the dome be wanting, whose proud gate
Each morning vomits out the sneaking crowd
Of courtiers false, and in their turn abus'd?
Vile intercourse! What, tho' the glitt'ring robe
Of every hue reflected light can give—
The pride and gaze of fools oppress him not?—
Sure peace is his: a solid life estrang'd
To disappointment, and fallacious hope—
These are not wanting—*nor the chide of streams*
And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere
Into the guiltless breast, *beneath the shade,* &c.

ver. 1267.

Mr. Roscoe, in his life of Lorenzo de Medici, has favoured us with some verses of this highly-gifted sage, which are obviously drawn from the same exuberant fountain, and are at least equal to any of those I have already quoted.

Cerchi chi vuol, le pompi e gli alte honori
Le piazze, e tempii, e gli edificii magni,
Le delicie, il tesor, qual accompagni
Mille duri pensier, mille dolori:
Un verde praticel pien di bei fiori,
Un rivolo, che l'herba intorno bagni,
Un augelletto, che d'amor si lagni,
Acquetta molto meglio i nostro ardori:
L'ombrose selve, i sassi, e gli alti monti,
Gli antri oscuri e le fere fugitivi,
* * * * * * *
Quivi veggo io con pensier vaghi;
* * * * * * *
Qui me le toglie hor una, hor altra cosa.

Seek he who will in grandeur to be blest,
Place in proud halls, and splendid courts his joy;
For pleasure or for gold his arts employ,
Whilst all his hours unnumber'd cares molest.
A little field in native flow'rets drest,
A riv'let in soft murmurs gliding by,
A bird, whose love-sick note salutes the sky,
With sweeter magic lull my cares to rest.
And shadowy woods, and rocks, and tow'ring hills,
And caves obscure, and nature's free-born train
* * * * * * *
Each in my mind some gentle thought instils;
* * * * * * *
Ah gentle thoughts! soon lost the city cares among.

Roscoe.

Ver. 23. —— *whose proud walls*
*A thousand lamps irradiate, propt sublime*

These, and the two ensuing verses, cannot but remind us of that exquisite painting of Milton:

Si non aurea sunt juvenum simulacra per ædeis,
Lampadas igniferas manibus retinentia dextris,
Lumina nocturnis epulis ut subpeditentur ;
Nec domus argento fulget, auroque renidet,
Nec citharæ reboant laqueata aurataque templa ;
Quom tamen inter se, prostratei in gramine molli,
Propter aquæ rivum, sub ramis arboris altæ,
Non magnis opibus jocunde corpora curant :
Præsertim, quom tempestas adridet, et anni
Tempora conspargunt viridanteis floribus herbas :
Nec calidæ citius decedunt corpore febres,
Textilibus si in picturis, ostroque rubenti,

From the arched roof
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps, and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha, and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky.

Ver. 29. *Yet listless laid the velvet grass along*] Hence, perhaps, Mr. Gray, in a passage admirably picturesque, and exquisite :

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader, browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'ercanopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the muse shall sit and think
At ease reclin'd.

In a beautiful Asiatic poem, entitled Moha Mudgara, or, A Remedy for Distraction of Mind, translated by Sir William Jones, we have a passage so consentaneous with the present, that I cannot avoid transcribing it. Here, however, the writer is a devotee, as well as a poet : " To dwell under the mansion of the high gods, at the foot of a tree ; to have the ground for a couch, and a hide for vesture ; to renounce all extrinsic enjoyments, whom doth not such devotion fill with delight ?" Jones's Works, i. 212.

Ver. 34. *On down reclin'd, or wrapp'd in purple robe*
*The thirsty fever burns with heat as fierce*, &c.] Towards this passage, we observe Horace turning his eye, in the first book of his Epistles :

Non domus et fundus, non æris acervus et auri
Ægroto domini deduxit *corpore febres*
Non animo curas. Epist. ii.

Nor splendid house, nor spacious land,
Nor wealth with wealth combin'd,
Can fevers from the flesh command,
Or troubles from the mind.

As he does also to the passage beginning at ver. 48, relating to cares and terrors. We meet with it the second book of his odes :

Non enim gazæ, neque consularis
Summovet lictor miseros tumultus
Mentis, et CURAS *laqueata* circum
*Tecta* volantes

A thousand lamps irradiate, propt sublime
By frolic forms of youths in massy gold,
Flinging their splendours o'er the midnight feast:
Though gold and silver blaze not o'er the board,
Nor music echo round the gaudy roof?
Yet listless laid the velvet grass along
Near gliding streams, by shadowy trees o'er-arch'd,
Such pomps we need not; such still less when spring
Leads forth her laughing train, and the warm year
Paints the green meads with roseat flowers profuse.
On down reclin'd, or wrapp'd in purple robe
The thirsty fever burns with heat as fierce

---

Nor glittering pomp, nor guards of state
Can soothe the sighing heart,
Nor from the mansions of the great
Bid hovering CARES depart.

Linnéus, in his Flora Lapponica, has given us a description of Lapland manners, so generally coincident with this beautiful picture of still life, as contrasted with the riotous pleasures of the world, that I can have no doubt the philosophic botanist had his eye turned to our own poet at the time he wrote it. It commences, indeed, with an obvious imitation of Virgil, in a passage which Virgil most unquestionably deduced from Lucretius. O fortunatos nimium! sua si bona norint, &c. O felix Lappo! qui in ultimo angulo mundi sic bene lates contentus et innocens.—Tu dormis hic sub tuâ pelle ab omnibus curis, contentionibus, rixis liber, ignorans quid sit invidia. Tu ducis innocentissimos tuos annos ultra centenarium numerum cum facili senectute, et *summâ sanitate*. Te *latent myriades morborum* nostris Europæis communes. *Tu vivis in sylvis*, avis instar, nec sementem facis, nec metis, tamen alit te Deus optimus optime. *Tua ornamenta sunt tremula arborum folia graminosique luci. Tuus potus aqua crystallinæ pelluciditatis.*—Te non obruit scorbutus, nec *febris* intermittens, nec obesitas, nec podagra; *fibroso gaudes corpore et alacri animoque libero.* O sancta innocentia, estne hic tuus thronus inter Faunos in summo septentrione, inque velissimâ habita terra? numne sic præfers stragula hæc betulina mollibus senio tectis plumis? Sic etiam credidere veteres, nec male. "O happy Lappian! who thus hidest thyself in the remotest corner of the earth, content and innocent. Thou reposest under thy bear-skin, void of all strife, contention, or care, and altogether ignorant of envy. Thou extendest thine innocent years beyond a century, happy in an easy age, and *in the full fruition of health. From thee are hidden the myriads of diseases* that are common to us more enlightened Europeans. *Thou livest in the woods* like a bird, neither sowing nor reaping; but God, most benevolent, nourishes thee most benevolently. *Thine ornaments are the tremulous foliage of trees, and the grassy shades: thy beverage, the stream of crystal transparency.* Thee, the scurvy destroys not, nor the intermitting *fever*, nor unwieldy corpulence, nor the gout: *thou rejoicest in a body*

Jacteris, quam si plebeiâ in veste cubandum est.
Quapropter, quoniam nihil nostro in corpore gazæ
Proficiunt, neque nobilitas, nec gloria regni ;
Quod super est, animo quoque nihil prodesse putandum :
Si non, forte tuas legiones per loca campi
Fervere quom videas, belli simulacra cienteis ;
Fervere quom videas classem, lateque vagari ;
Hiis tibi cum rebus, timefactæ, Religiones
Ecfugiunt animo pavidæ, mortisque timores ;
Tum vacuum tempus linquunt, curâque solutum :
Quod, si ridicula hæc, ludibriaque, esse videmus ;
Re verâque Metus hominum, Curæque sequaces,
Nec metuunt sonitus armorum, nec fera tela ;
Audacterque inter reges rerumque potenteis
Vorsantur, neque fulgorem reverentur ab auro,
Nec clarum vestis splendorem purpureaï :
Quid dubitas, quin omnis sit hæc rationis potestas ?
Omnis quom in tenebris præsertim vita laboret.
Nam, velutei puerei trepidant, atque omnia cæcis
In tenebris metunt ; sic nos in luce timemus
Interdum, nihilo quæ sunt metuenda magis, quam

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*active and muscular, and in a mind, free and unfettered.* O holy innocence! hast thou not established here thy rural throne, in these utmost borders of the north, in this most abject climate of the world? and *dost not thou thus prefer these rude and unsheltered sheds to the softer mansions of silk and down?*" This picturesque description is consistent with the assertions of our most credible travellers. Our own poet, Dyer, therefore, is, in some degree, incorrect in painting, as he has done in the first book of his

As when its victim on a pallet pants.
Since, then, nor wealth, nor splendour, nor the boast
Of birth illustrious, nor e'en regal state
Avails the body, so the free-born mind
Their aid as little asks. Unless, perchance,
The warlike host, thou deem, for thee array'd
In martial pomp, and o'er the fiery field
Panting for glory; and the gorgeous fleet,
For thee unmoor'd, and ardent,—can dispel
Each superstitious terror; from the breast
Root out the dread of death, and lull to peace
The cares, the tumults that distract thy soul.
But if all this be idle, if the CARES,
The TERRORS still that haunt, and harass man,
Dread not the din of arms,—o'er kings and chiefs,
Press unabash'd, unaw'd by glittering pomp,
The purple robe unheeding—canst thou doubt
Man pants for these from poverty of mind,
Wand'ring in darkness, and through life misled?
For as the boy, when midnight veils the skies,
Trembles, and starts at all things, so, full oft,

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Fleece, the life and abode of the inhabitants of Lapland in the most dreary colours; and in representing them as totally devoid of all happiness and science. Delille, who has probably taken Linnéus for his guide, is, on this account, more true to nature, and more entitled to praise. His delineation occurs in Les Jardins Chant, iii.

Oh, combien des Lapons l'usage heureux m'enchante!
Qu'ils savent bien tromper leurs hivers rigoureux! &c.

Quæ puerei in tenebris pavitant, finguntque futura.
Hunc igitur terrorem animi, tenebrasque, necesse est,
Non radiei solis, neque lucida tela diei,
Discutiant; sed Naturæ species, Ratioque. 60

Nunc age, quo metu genitalia materiaï
Corpora res varias gignant, genitasque resolvant;

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Ver. 55. *For as the boy, when midnight veils the skies,*
*Trembles, and starts at all things, so, full oft,*
*Ee'n in the noon, men start*——] Seneca has quoted the two Latin lines corresponding to this version, in his Epistle 112, and has endeavoured to refute their illustration. He seems to apprehend, that the poet meaned to throw the blame of all the errors, into which men are perpetually plunging, upon their peculiar frame and constitution; and he is hence anxious to exculpate the Deity from a charge which, as the creator of mankind, would necessarily attach to him. "We do not start," says he, "whilst in the light; but, unfortunately, we have made every thing dark around us: we therefore see nothing whatever; neither what will injure, nor what will benefit us. But we may acquire light, if we chuse it; and hence alone may we acquire it—by the study of those things which relate to God and man." Non timemus in luce, Lucreti, sed omnia nobis fecimus tenebras," &c. This opposition to our poet is altogether idle, and unworthy a philosopher of Seneca's talents: the fact of error, as specified by himself, is the same which was before specified by Lucretius; and the means of avoiding such error is the same likewise—the study of *Truth and Wisdom.*

In direct repugnance to the taste and judgment of Seneca, Lucretius himself appears to have been particularly pleased with this simile: for he has reintroduced it both into the third and sixth book, and that without altering a syllable. See book iii. 55, and book vi. 35.

Ver. 58. ——*phantoms false*
*By darkness conjur'd,*——] The facetious Butler has some humorous verses to the fame effect, which the reader will not be displeased with perusing in this place.

Who would believe what strange bugbears
Mankind creates itself of fears?
That spring, like fern, that insect weed,
Equivocally, without seed;
And have no possible foundation
But merely in th' imagination;
And yet can do more dreadful feats
Than hags, with all their imps and teats,
Make more bewitch, and haunt themselves,
Than all their nursery of elves.
Hudib. Part III. iii. 1.

Ver. 60. *A terror this the radiant darts of day*] A favourite metaphor with our poet, as I have already observed. See note on b. i. 166. In the Complaint of Titus Andronicus, an old poem introduced into Dr. Percy's collection, we meet with a figure not very dissimilar:

I *shot my arrowes* towards heaven high,
And for revenge to hell did often cry.

This couplet is, however, obviously taken from Psalm lxiv. 3, 4.

Hide me from the plots of the malignant—
Who whet their tongues like a sword;
And aim poisonous words, *like arrows,*

E'en in the noon men start at forms as void
Of real danger as the phantoms false
By darkness conjur'd, and the school-boy's dread.
A terror this the radiant darts of day
Can ne'er disperse: to truth's pure light alone,
And wisdom yielding, intellectual suns.
Come, then, and mark how seeds primordial form
Created things, and how, when form'd, dissolve:

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To *shoot* secretly at the innocent.
Clandestinely *shoot they*, and are not seen.

In this version, I have followed the Syriac reading, as confirmed by twelve MSS. So, Sol. Songs, viii. 6. should be rendered

For love is strong as death
'And' jealousy cruel as the grave;
Its *flames are arrows* of fire,
Which Jehovah kindleth in the heavens!

See the note on this passage in my version of the Song of Songs.

Not dissimilar is the figure employed by St. Paul, Rom. xiii. 12. ενδυσωμεθα τα οπλα του φωτος, "Let us put on *the armour of* LIGHT."—Dante appears to have had Lucretius in view, when composing the following verses:

Or come ai colpe degli caldi rui
Della neve riman nudo'l suggetto,
E dal colore, e dal freddo primai;
Così rimaso te nello intelletto
Voglio informar di luce sì vivace,
Che ti tremolerà nel suo aspetto.

Now, as when vernal Sol begins to glow,
Down sinks the wintry mass of drifted snow
From Nature's face before his burning gaze;
Thus from your mind the darksome vest shall fall,
That hides your intellects in sombrous pall,
When truth divides the vale with piercing rays.
BOYD.

Ver. 63. *Come, then, and mark how seeds primordial form*
*Created things,*——] The poet now proposes the immediate subject of the book before us—the motion of elementary atoms, and the consequent production of material things. He has already traced their existence, and described them as floating, not only through the ocean of the atmosphere, but through the immense ocean of space; and has in general terms asserted, what he now undertakes to prove more decisively; namely, that it is from peculiar combinations, and juxta-positions of these corpuscles, that every material form or conglomeration of forms is produced. Before we enter upon an analysis of the theory invented by Epicurus, to account for the express mode by which such combinations, and juxta-positions of primary elements, take place, I cannot avoid noticing that the writings of several modern philosophers, and especially of those who have lately published essays on the subject of meteoric stones, or substances which, in almost every quarter of the globe, have been traced to have fallen from the Heavens, have reverted, in a very considerable degree, to the Epicurean theory, so far as we have hitherto advanced in considering it, and have added, in no small measure, to its probability. It is now generally admitted that the elements of all bodies may exist in a state of gass; that even gasses themselves may be compounds; that sulphur, quicksilver, and

Et, quâ vi facere id cogantur, quæque sit ollis
Reddita mobilitas magnum per inane meandi,

the most closely-vitrified flint may assume an aërial form; and that iron has been found, not only in the blood of animals, but in the juices of plants which have been purposely guarded from the access of all bodies of which this metal has been supposed to constitute a component part. The elementary particles of all bodies being thus capable of extreme division and volatilization, M. Hombolt has conceived that atmospheric stones, which fall to the earth, have been previously volatilized by the medium of hydrogenous gass, which, inflaming in the upper regions of the atmosphere, re-unites their primary corpuscles, that till then existed in a state of mutual repulsion. The opinion which contends, that the elements of these masses are a simple aggregate of the volatilized débris of substances emitted from the earth, united by mere affinity of composition; that of M. Patrin, who conceives that the substances which feed volcanos and meteoric stones are of the same description, and are furnished by the fluids of the atmosphere which circulate through the upper strata of the globe, and are there variously modified and combined; that of M. Izarn, who conjectures, as I have already observed, that all gasses themselves are compounds, and that all the most solid substances in nature are mere combinations of the elementary matter of gasses, whence solid substances may as readily be gendered in the air as beneath the earth: these theories all point to the hypothesis of Epicurus as their common basis, so far, I mean, as relates to the existence and diffusion of elementary atoms through every point of nature, through the earth, the atmosphere, and even the immensity of space. Those who, reasoning from M. La Place's calculation, respecting the projectile force necessary to throw bodies from the moon towards the earth, derive these substances from lunar volcanos, approximate the Epicurean tenet, however, in a greater degree still; for such not only admit the existence of the same material corpuscles through different planets, but a power of actual combination into the same aggregate substances throughout every orb in the universe: while M. Chladni, who conjectures that these bodies are formed from substances exterior to the atmosphere of the earth and other planets, substances which have never incorporated with them, and are consequently found loose in the vast ocean of space, seems to embrace this part of the Epicurean theory in its utmost latitude. But it is time to attend to the mode by which, according to Epicurus, these elementary atoms are united and combined. According to Democritus, and the earlier atomic philosophers, the motions of primary corpuscles were only produced by solidity, weight, or re-action. Every atom was supposed to be intrinsically ponderous, and of course to be constantly descending, and that in a direction perfectly rectilinear. As some atoms, however, were conceived to be larger, and consequently more ponderous than others, it was imagined, that some must move with more velocity than others—that the heavier must overtake the lighter—that they must impinge against each other with considerable force—and that a new species of motion would be hereby engendered,—a motion by re-action, as the former was a motion by mere weight. These laws being either essential, or eternally imposed, every thing, it was contended, must arise regularly and necessarily: for the degree of resilition, produced by the impulse of atom against atom, is a result as certain, and, allowing for the effect of magnitude, and consequent velocity, as calculable, as the measure of distance produced by weight alone. Order, therefore, it was asserted, must be the unavoidable issue of such a combination of facts: and definite results must, in every individual instance, follow, with the certainty of fate, from definite causes.

But, by various experiments, which Epicurus had been fortunate enough to make, it appeared, that although, in dense mediums, bodies of greater solidity, and consequently containing a larger quantity of matter, descended with more velocity than lighter and less solid bodies, yet, where no medium at all existed, and they were surrounded by a pure vacuum, as it was conceived, in space they must

Their force, their action, whence, and power to move, 65
Pass, and repass through all th' immense of space:

ever be, the velocity of descent was, at all times, equal: and that, of course, in passing through space, the larger or more solid corpuscles could never overtake the lighter. Hence Epicurus was convinced, that, upon this theory, re-action and resilition must be totally impossible; for, as the primal atoms of matter could never reach each other in a rectilinear course, they could never rebound, and be thrown back into the sphere of action of atoms still behind. And if it were possible to conceive that, from such rectilinear motion alone, the complex bodies of nature could in any way be produced, (a motion that is perpetually fixed and unchangeable in its operation,) then must there be, in every instance, a fixed necessity imposed, not only upon the facts, and events of matter in general, but also upon the thoughts, volitions, and actions of intelligent beings; the soul itself being, upon their hypothesis, as truly and essentially material as the exterior world around it; which moral necessity the atomists, in general, did not chuse to admit.

To remedy these defects and inconsistencies, to avail himself of the advantages of the motion by re-action, and to preserve to the soul the power of moral liberty, Epicurus conceived a third species of motion; and maintained, as will be found in the sequel of the present Book, that material atoms did not perpetually descend in a direction strictly rectilinear, but occasionally oscillated, the time and place being alike uncertain, from a direct line, though in the smallest degree possible: hereby bestowing a motion upon them, in no small degree, similar to the oscillations of the magnetic needle. And his motive for conceiving this oscillation to be so extremely minute, producing, as Lucretius observes, a declination from a right line, but not an obliquity, was, that otherwise he would have been opposed by palpable, or at least, ostensible facts: for every thing that descends, appears to the eye to descend in a line perfectly direct: the deviation or curvilinear motion was, therefore, supposed by Epicurus to be so minute, as altogether to elude the power of vision. This additional motion to the system of Democritus is thus noticed by Plutarch, and by him ascribed solely to Epicurus: Δυο κρουσεις, το γενος της κινησεως, το κατα πλαγιον· Επικουρος, ουδ' ολως της κινησεως το κατα σταθμην και το κατα παρεγκλισιν. Plac. Phil. i. 23.

By this hypothesis, undoubtedly, its author was able to account, in a much more specious manner than any who had preceded him, for the motion of material atoms by re-action; but it does not, in any respect, appear calculated to solve the difficulties concerning moral liberty, nor to administer to the mind a greater degree of freedom than nature is found to possess in any other department. For, if the times and places in which primal seeds could decline from a right line were, as Epicurus declared they were, ever and alike uncertain, then must every event around us, as well as every thought within us, be altogether, and alike, contingent. If, on the contrary, we remove the uncertainty, then must the same necessity occur, which this addition is intended to remove. Independently of which, the addition itself was at best but a conjecture, and a conjecture which the constant succession of facts rather controverted than supported: for, as Lucretius himself acknowledges, bodies never appear to the sight to move otherwise than in a rectilinear direction. On both these accounts, this hypothesis of Epicurus was opposed with much violence, and certainly with some success, by the immaterialists of the Stoic and Platonic schools.

Among these antagonists Cicero appears to have been one of its most formidable opponents; and, from the friendship which subsisted between himself and Lucretius, no man can be conceived to have heard more urged in its favour than the former. His books on "the Nature of the Gods," and "on Fate," are filled with arguments subversive of the Epicurean theory. "What," observes he, "can be the cause of such a declination, and why is not such cause assigned? If the rectilinear motion of material atoms springs from gravity, why has not Epicurus told us by what means other atoms are freed from this common bond? Have they cast lots among themselves, or by what other means have they mu-

Expediam: tu te dictis præbere memento.
Nam certe non inter se stipata cohæret
Materies; quoniam minui rem quamque videmus,
Et quasi longinquo fluere omnia cernimus ævo,
Ex oculisque vetustatem subducere nostris;
Quom tamen incolomis videatur summa manere;
Propterea, quia, quæ decedunt corpora quoique,
Unde abeunt, minuunt; quo venere, augmine donant:
Illa senescere, at hæc contra florescere, cogunt.
Nec remorantur ibei; sic rerum summa novatur
Semper, et inter se mortales mutua vivunt:
Augescunt aliæ gentes, aliæ minuuntur;
Inque brevi spatio mutantur secla animantum,
Et, quasi cursores, vitaï lampada tradunt.

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tually determined which atoms shall decline, and which shall persevere? And why, if they decline at all, may not the declination be several degrees removed from a right line, as well as the minutest degree imaginable? How, too, does it appear, if there be any necessity in nature for such declination, that the same necessity does not equally prevail among the declining as among the rectilinear atoms, in which case all the advantage of the hypothesis is destroyed in a moment?" These arguments of Cicero, and which Lucretius endeavours to combat, have from time to time been copied and re-advanced by every modern philosopher, who has entered the lists against the disciples of the atomic school of Epicurus: and they may be traced most fully, and triumphantly displayed, in the Anti-Lucretius of the Cardinal Polignac, and the "Creation" of our own countryman, Sir Richard Blackmore.

The most able supporter of the atomic school, in modern times, was Gassendi;—and, sensible of the weakness of this doctrine of an oscillation of atoms, and the curvilinear motion which depended upon it, at the same time convinced of the necessity of some free and uncontrolled action in nature, whence the mind obtains that moral liberty of which it appears conscious—he discarded the invention altogether—and contended, agreeably to the old hypothesis of Democritus, that moral spontaneity was obtained from the difference of velocity with which material atoms descended; a difference which, in a vast variety of cases, was altogether indefinite, and anomalous. Gassendi was supported in the re-advancement

Benign attend, while thus the muse explains.
Doubtless no substance boasts a bond within
Indissoluble, since each gradual wastes,
And, in the lapse of time, flies off entire,
By age o'erpower'd. Yet the great mass of things
Still meets the view uninjur'd, from the stores
Sustain'd of primal atoms. These, as oft
Their punctual flight they take, each form decrease,
And, as they join, augment: hence things attain
Their growth mature, and thence their sure decay.
Thus, void of rest, the changeful world renews,
And man on man lives mutual; nations thus
Flourish, or fade; a few brief years roll round,
And sire to son, through ev'ry reasoning rank,
Yields, like a racer o'er the busy course,
His lamp of life, and instant disappears.

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of this hypothesis by the entire system of Des Cartes, while that of Sir Isaac Newton was completely in opposition to him, which, in strict consonance with the doctrine of Epicurus, regarded all matter whatever as equally affected by gravity, and as falling with equal velocity in a vacuum: an opinion which has since been unequivocally confirmed by experiments with the air-pump. In consequence of this opposition, and of the growing reputation of the Newtonian theory, Gassendi does not appear to have drawn many philosophers into his own system; and the generality of materialists are now rather disposed to admit of an equal constraint existing in the operations of body and mind, than to fatigue themselves with searching farther for any occult cause of discrepancy.

It becomes me to state, before I close this note, that, excepting this single conjecture of the declination of atoms, the doctrines, maintained and illustrated in the book before us, are erected upon the most solid reasoning, and confirmed by the assent and experiments of the sagest philosophers of modern times. It is, as I have before observed, the system of Sir Isaac Newton himself; and the arguments advanced are those with which he combated the hypothesis of Des Cartes. We cannot but be astonished at the force and perspicuity with which they are urged, and the extent of philosophic knowledge they evince.

Ver. 81. *Yields, like a racer o'er the busy course,*
*His lamp of life,——]* The poet, in this passage, alludes to the torch-games, instituted in honour of Vulcan, and of which a particular account is given

Si cessare putas rerum primordia posse,
Cessandoque novos rerum progignere motus;
Avius a verâ longe ratione vagaris.
Nam, quoniam per inane vagantur, cuncta necesse est
Aut gravitate suâ ferri primordia rerum,
Aut ictu forte alterius: nam, concita, sæpe,
Obvia quom flixere, fit, ut divorsa repente
Dissiliant: neque enim mirum, durissima quæ sint,
Ponderibus solidis, neque quidquam a tergo ibus obstet.
Et, quo jactari magis omnia materiaï
Corpora pervideas, reminiscere, totius imum
Nihil esse in summâ; neque habere, ubi corpora prima
Consistant: quoniam spatium sine fine modoque est,

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by Pausanias, as also by the scholiast on Aristophanes, in his comedy of "the Frogs." The dexterity of the contest consisted in keeping the lamp or torch burning, during the rapidity evinced by the different candidates in running. He who first reached the goal with his lamp burning, was proclaimed victor; and the rest successively resigned their lamps to him in the order in which they arrived, as so many trophies acquired in the competition. Plato has an allusion to the same public sports, in his treatise de Legibus, Γινοντες και εκτρεφοντες παιδας, καθαπερ λαμπαδα τον βιον παραδιδοντες αλλοις εξ αλλων: "engendering and rearing children, and in this manner delivering down life, as a lamp, from man to man."

The former part of this passage, which is designed to prove the existence of a perpetual motion in material atoms, although this motion be not always conspicuous, is well imitated by Ovid, in his Metamorphoses:

———Rerumque novatrix
Ex aliis alias reparat natura figuras:
Nec perit in tanto quicquam, mihi credite, mundo,
Sed variat, faciemque novat. Met. 15. v. 252.

———for nature knows
No stedfast station, but or ebbs, or flows;
Ever in motion, she destroys her old,
And casts new figures in another mould. Dryden.

The melancholy muse of Young has expressed the same idea in terms so appropriate, but at the same time so totally different, that I shall take the liberty of quoting his description for a comparison with those of Lucretius and Ovid:

Where is the dust that has not been alive?
The spade, the plough disturb our ancestors;

Who deems primordial atoms e'er can rest,
And, resting, urge through matter motion still,
Far wanders from the truth. Primordial seeds
Through space unfathom'd as their flight they wing,
From their own gravitating pow'r must pass,
Or blows extrinsic; each o'er each, alike,
Casual prevails: for oft the mass of seeds
That prone descends, with seeds repugnant meet
In contest tough, and distant far rebound.
Nor wondrous this, of firmest texture form'd,
And nought t' obstruct the retro-cursive flight.
And though thou trace the seeds unequal heap'd
Of primal matter, still, reflect, th' entire
Knows nought of bottom, nought of spot profound
Where they may rest collected: space throughout

---

From human mould we reap our daily bread.
The globe around earth's hollow surface shakes,
And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.

Ver. 82. —*lamp of life,*——] The phrase is strictly oriental. Thus, Sam. II. xx. 17. "Thou shalt no more accompany us to battle, lest thou *quench the lamp* of Israel." So Luke ii. 32. "A *light* to *illumine* the Gentiles, and *the glory* of thy people Israel." So the sentimental Sadi, in his "Book of Apoththegms:"

کسي را که کردد زبان
دروغ
چراغ دلشرا نباشد فروغ

No *light* to him his *lamp of life* shall yield,
Who learns the liar's subtle arms to wield.

In the following verses, Polignac has borrowed, but not expanded the idea:

——frigida mors *extinxit flammea vitæ*
Semina, *cælestisque evanuit halitus auræ.*
Anti-Lucr. v. 966.

*The flaming seeds of life were quench'd* in death;
And heaven's own spirit vanish'd with the breath.

Ver. 85. —*Primordial seeds——*
*From their own gravitating pow'r must pass,*
*Or blows extrinsic;*——] The poet here enumerates the two first modes of motion common to material atoms, and admitted by Epicurus, of which a more particular account has already been given in note on ver. 63 of this book.

Inmensumque patere in cunctas undique parteis
Pluribus obtendit; certâ et ratione probatum est.
Quod quoniam constat, nimirum nulla quies est
Reddita corporibus primis per inane profundum;
Sed magis, adsiduo varioque exercita motu,
Partim intervallis magnis conflicta resultant,
Pars etiam brevibus spatiis nexantur ab ictu.
Et, quæquomque, magis condenso conciliatu,
Exiguis intervallis, convecta resultant,
Indupedita suis perplexis ipsa figuris;
Hæc validas saxi radices, et fera ferri
Corpora constituunt, et cætera de genere horum
Paucula: quæ porro magnum per inane vagantur,
Cætera dissiliunt longe, longeque recursant,
In magnis intervallis; hæc aëra rarum
Subficiunt nobis, et splendida lumina solis.
Multaque præterea magnum per inane vagantur,
Conciliis rerum quæ sunt rejecta, nec usquam
Consociare etiam coitus potuere recepta:
Quoius, utei memoro, rei simulacrum, et imago,
Ante oculos semper nobis vorsatur, et instat.
Contemplator enim, quom solis lumina quomque

---

Ver. 117. *Not unresembling, if aright I deem,*
*Those motes minute that, when th' obtrusive sun*] For this comparison, the Epicureans are totally indebted to the atomic schools of Democritus and Leucippus, who, as Aristotle informs us, in a passage quoted by Lambinus, illustrate these anomalous

Boundless exists, as, in our earlier verse,
Decisive prov'd, on ev'ry side immense.
Hence, then, primordial seeds through space profound
Repose can never know: but rather, urg'd
To ceaseless motions, varying and adverse,
By the rude conflict part far off rebound,
And part with speed unite, the sev'ring blow
Surmounted soon. Hence those, through trivial space
Briefly repell'd, the vig'rous bond scarce broke,
With quick reunion intertwining strong,
Form the rude base of flints, and rigid steel,
And matters firm alike: while those, beyond
Far wand'ring through the void, of feebler link
Mutual possest, the liquid air create,
And the pure light the sun perpetual pours.

Nor these the whole compose. For seeds there are
That through the boundless void for ever stray,
Of social bond abhorrent, and in turn
Refus'd all compact in the frame of things:
Not unresembling, if aright I deem,
Those motes minute that, when th' obtrusive sun

---

atoms by the express simile of motes meandering in the air, and visible in the sun-beams, when they dart through some crevice into a darkened chamber. Οθεν Δημοκριτος μεν πυρ τι και θερμον φησιν αυτην [illegible] &c. lib. i. sect. 2. The whole force and spirit of the illustration is lost sight of by Des Coutures, who totally

Insertei fundunt radici per opaca domorum:
Multa minuta, modis multis, per inane videbis
Corpora misceri, radiorum lumine in ipso;
Et, velut æterno certamine, prœlia pugnasque
Edere, turmatim certantia; nec dare pausam,
Conciliis et discidiis exercita crebris:
Conjicere ut possis ex hoc, primordia rerum,
Quale sit, in magno jactari semper inani;
Dum taxat rerum magnarum parva potest res
Exemplare dare, et vestigia notitiaï.
Hoc etiam magis hæc animum te advortere par est
Corpora, quæ in solis radiis turbare videntur;
Quod tales turbæ motus quoque materiaï
Significant clandestinos cæcosque subesse.
Multa videbis enim plagis ibi percita cæcis

---

omits the idea of a darkened room, into which only a single beam of light can pass at a time through a crevice in the shutter:

quom solis lumina quomque
Insertei fundunt radios *per opaca domorum*.

"Le soleil," says the Baron, in his version, "ce me semble, en fournit une image assez vrai-semblable; lorsque sa lumiere penetre dans les maisons, vous y voyez *par le vuide*, une infinité de petits corps," &c.

Ver. 122. *There may'st thou view them, now in crowds combine,*] .

So Dante, closely and elegantly copying our poet:

Così si veggion quì diritte e torte,
Veloci e tarde, rinovando vista,
Le minuzie de' corpi lunghe e corte
Muoversi per lo raggio, onde si lista
Tal volta l'ombra, che per sua difesa
La gente con ingegno ed arte acquista.

So, brisk, and tardy, in fantastic ring,
Their giddy flight the mazy atoms wing,
That on the sun-beam sport, whose lucid braid
Peeps, not unfrequent, through the shutter'd shade;

Peeps through some crevice in the shutter'd shade,
The day-dark hall illuming, float amain
In his bright beam, and wage eternal war.
There may'st thou view them, now in crowds combine,
Now part discordant, o'er the restless scene
Urging the pigmy battle; and may'st hence
Learn what vast contests oft mid primal seeds,
Ceaseless, prevail, through boundless space propell'd.
Thus things minute instruct us, and unfold
The laws, at times, of things momentous most.
Such motes, moreo'er, and let the sage remark
Impress thy judgment, agitated thus
In the pure sun-beam, from the strife alone
Prove, in their primal seeds, some motion lurks
Unseen, and secret, whence the pigmy mass
Draws motion first. For oft the curious eye
Sees the light goss, by viewless force subdu'd,

---

That, with nice finger, rears dedalian art
To skreen the temples from its radiant dart.

The reader, acquainted with the Minstrel, cannot but be reminded, in this place, of Beattie's fanciful and picturesque description of the dance of the warrior fairies, as represented to Edwin in his dream:

The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
And loud enliv'ning strains provoke the dance;
They meet, they dart away, they wheel askance;
To right, to left, they thrid the flying maze;
Now bound aloft with vig'rous spring, then glance
Rapid along. B. i. 35.

So Thomson, describing the busy flight of insects:

Thick in yon stream of light, a thousand ways,
Upward and downward, thwarting and convolv'd,
The quiv'ring nations sport; till, tempest-wing'd,
Fierce Winter sweeps them from the face of day.
SUMMER, 342.

Conmutare viam, retroque repulsa revorti,
Nunc huc, nunc illuc, in cunctas undique parteis.
Scilicet hicc' a principiis est omnibus error:
Prima moventur enim per se primordia rerum;
Inde ea, quæ parvo sunt corpora conciliatu,
Et quasi proxima sunt ad vireis principiorum,
Ictibus illorum cæcis impulsa, cientur;
Ipsaque, quæ porro paullo majora, lacessunt.
Sic a principiis adscendit motus, et exit
Paullatim nostros ad sensus; ut moveantur
Illa quoque, in solis quæ lumine cernere quimus;
Nec quibus id faciant plagis adparet aperte.

Nunc, quæ mobilitas sit reddita materiaï
Corporibus, paucis licet hinc cognoscere, Memmi.
Primum, Aurora novo quom spargit lumine terras,
Et variæ volucres, nemora avia pervolitantes
Aëra per tenerum, liquidis loca vocibus obplent;
Quam subito soleat sol ortus tempore tali

---

Ver. 149. *When first Aurora, o'er the dewy earth,*] This beautiful picture of the day-spring has been closely imitated by Virgil, who has, at the same time, added a few additional touches of the pencil, more accurately to discriminate the precise situation of his hero at the moment:

Jamque rubescebat radiis mare, et æthere ab alto
*Aurora* in roseis *fulgebat* lutea bigis;
———*variæ circumque supraque*
*Assuetæ* ripis *volucres* et fluminis alveo
*Æthera mulcebant cantu, lucoque volabant.*
Æneid vii. 25

Now burns the main—along the saffron skies,
In roses deck'd, Aurora's chariot flies:—
From brooks and groves a thousand songsters spring,
All ether charming with the strains they sing.

Ver. 150. *through the pathless grove*
*A thousand songsters ope their liquid throats,*
*All ether charming*——] To the same effect, Spenser;

The whiles the joyous birds make their pastime
Amongst the shady leaves, their sweet abode,
And their true loves without suspicion tell abroad.
Fairy Queen.

Turn from the path selected, backwards urg'd,
Now here, now there, through ev'ry point propell'd.
Such the perplexing power of primal seeds.
From seeds all motion springs; by impulse hence
Through molecules minute of seeds conjoin'd,
Nearest in power, protruded, though unseen.
Hence urg'd again, in turn, through things create
Of ampler form, till soon the sense itself
The congregated action marks distinct.
As in the lucid beam's light woof we trace
Still motion visual, though unseen its source.

Nor small the motive power of primal seeds.
This, Memmius, should'st thou doubt, we thus confirm:
When first Aurora, o'er the dewy earth,
Spreads her soft light, and through the pathless grove
A thousand songsters ope their liquid throats,
All ether charming—sudden we survey

---

Ver. 152. —*sudden we survey*
*Th' effusive sun, as with a garment, deck*
*With his own radiance, all created things;*] So Ps. civ. 1. 2.

With glory and majesty art thou *clothed;*
Thou art *covered with light as with* a garment.

This parallelism of imagery between the Hebrew and the Roman bard, is as striking, as the imagery itself is bold and appropriate.

It is thus imitated by Milton, in his address to Light:

Before the sun thou wast; and at the voice
Of God, *as with a mantle didst invest*
The rising world. Par. Lost, iii. 8.

Thomson has a similar invocation, and composed of similar imagery:

Prime chearer Light!
Of all material beings first and best!
Efflux divine! Nature's *resplendent robe!*
Without whose *vesting beauty*, all were wrapt
In unessential gloom!

Summer, 90.

Convestire suâ perfundens omnia luce,
Omnibus in promptu manifestumque esse videmus.
At vapor is, quem sol mittit, lumenque serenum,
Non per inane meat vacuum; quo tardius ire
Cogitur, aërias quod sic diverberet undas:
Nec singillatim corpuscula quæque, vapores,
Sed conplexa, meant inter se, conque globata:
Quapropter simul inter se retrahuntur; et extra
Obficiuntur, utei cogantur tardius ire.
At, quæ sunt solidâ primordia simplicitate,
Quom per inane meant vacuum, nec res remoræ fit
Ulla foris, atque ipsa, suis e partibus unum,
Unum in quem cœpere, locum connixa feruntur;
Debent nimirum præcellere mobilitate,
Et multo citius ferri, quam lumina solis;

---

Perfectly accordant is the following splendid description of Klopstock, in his Messias:

——Hier füllen nur sonnen den umkreis;
Und, gleich *ein hülle gewebt aus strahlen des urlichts*,
*Zieht sich ihr glanz* um den himmel herum. Ges. i.

Here only suns the vast horizon fill;
Whose intermingling beams a *robe of light*
*Weave that enwraps* the bright expanse of heaven.

Not foreign to the same elegant figure, is the following of Tarafa, an Arabian poet, in his Albeeriyyo, one of the seven metrical effusions which were suspended in golden characters in the temple of Mecca. He is describing the fair maid, of whom he was enamoured. I copy from Sir William Jones, "Her face appears to be *wrapped in a veil of sun-beams*; unblemished is her complexion, and her skin without a wrinkle."

Wawcjhín cáïnna álshemsa hhallat ridáahá
Alaíhi wikcí allaúni lam yatakhaddedi. Vol. iv.

Ver. 155. *Instant in speed, unbounded in his blaze.*] This inimitable description of the rapidity of light, is thus glanced at by Cowley, in his celebrated Hymn to the same power:

Swift as light thoughts their empty career run—
Thy race is finished when begun.

And so exact is this idea, to what was meant to be conveyed by Lucretius, that Creech, in his version of the Nature of Things, has thought he could not do better than copy the latter line verbally: accordingly, he has given us for his translation,

How swift the beams of the bright rising sun
Shoot forth! *their race is finished when begun.*

Th' effusive sun, as with a garment, deck
With his own radiance, all created things;
Instant in speed, unbounded in his blaze.
But the bright fluid, the pure stream he throws,
Flows not without resistance; many a wave,
Through space profound, etherial checks its flight;
And many a self-engender'd power perverse,
Rear'd from its complex frame: perpetual hence
Lags the light fluid, doom'd to double strife.
But primal atoms, firm and solid sole
From pure simplicity, when through void space
Free and uncheck'd their easy course they wing,
One in themselves, at once their goal attain.
Hence than the rapid light more rapid still

---

Sir Richard Blackmore has likewise attempted an imitation of the same passage; but he is much more feeble than Cowley:

How soon the sun-beams at the morning's birth
Leap down from heaven, and light upon the earth!
Prodigious flight! they in few moments pass
The vast etherial interposing space. Creat. b. iv.

I have said, that these verses of Lucretius are inimitable: perhaps the following are the nearest that approach them:

See heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
*And break upon thee in a flood of day!*
Pope's Mess.

Ver. 166. *Hence than the rapid light more rapid still*
*Rush they,*——] It was not possible for Lucretius to have selected a more pertinent illustration of the speed with which the minutest atoms of matter may move, than by referring us to the phænomenon of light: the particles of which, although inconceivably minute, bear, however, no imaginable proportion, in point of subtlety, to these primal corpuscles. By referring us, moreover, to an acknowledged fact, he gains this additional advantage—that we must admit it to be possible for myriads of bodies to be moving, with incalculable velocity, around us, although we be not apprized of such motion, or even of their existence, by any of the senses we possess. Aristotle, and his followers, denied this corporiety of light, and of course, that it had any velocity, or could possibly move in time or space. See his treatise, De Anima, l. ii. And Frachetta, the Italian expositor of Lucretius, who had imbibed all the doctrines of the Peripatetic school, and was rivetted to

Multiplexque loci spatium transcurrere eodem
Tempore, quo solis pervolgant fulgura cœlum :
Nam neque consilio debent tardata morari,
Nec persectari primordia singula quæque,
Ut videant, quâ quidque geratur cum ratione.
At queidam contra hæc, ignarei, materiaï
Naturam non posse, deûm sine numine, reddi
Tanto opere humanis rationibus admoderate ;
Tempora mutare annorum, frugesque creare ;
Et jam cætera, mortaleis quæ suadet adire,
Ipsaque deducit, dux vitæ, dia Voluptas,

---

all its hypotheses, strenuously opposes this beautiful and correct illustration. Breve Spositione di tutta l'Opera di Lucretio. The principle affirmed by Lucretius, however, is corroborated by the best experiments, and the soundest inductions of the most able astronomers and physiologists of modern times, and is an additional proof of the general precision and truth of the Epicurean system. It is, however, becoming a fashion in philosophy at present, (for philosophy has its fashions, as well as other studies,) to decry this materiality of light, to establish which the atomic philosophers have written so many volumes, and Galileo, Newton, Nieuwentyt, and Bradley, have made so many experiments : and rather to give credit to the doctrine of Aristotle, as revived by Des Cartes and Euler, that light is produced, not by an emission of particles from luminous bodies, but by a vibratory motion excited by them, and propagated through the elastic medium of the air, or etherial fluid ; by which means the eye is operated upon in seeing, as the ear is in hearing.

But whilst this doctrine seems to be once more reviving on the Continent, and even in our own country, through the indefatigable efforts of Dr. Young, the experiments and reasonings of Mr. Melville, and Dr. Horsley, in vol. LVIII. and LX. of the Philosophical Transactions—are still, in my opinion, unsubverted, and insubvertible, and establish the Newtonian hypothesis on a basis which must subsist for ever.

Whether or not Lucretius himself had any mode of ascertaining the exact velocity of light, or merely wrote from a well-founded conjecture of such velocity, I know not. If he had, his experiments have never reached us, and the probability is, that no such experiments existed. Galileo, indeed, was the first philosopher who is known to have attempted any experiment upon this subject, and even his exertions were not crowned with complete success ; nor was it, till little more than a century ago, that any plan was devised, which was likely to answer such a purpose. This plan consisted in noticing the variations of the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites, from the time calculated in the tables, both when the earth approached in her orbit, and receded from this planet. The first experiments were made at the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris : and it was at length ascertained, that when the earth is between the sun and Jupiter, the satellites of this latter planet appear to us to be eclipsed about eight minutes sooner than they could be, according to the tables of

Rush they, in equal hour through ampler space
Urg'd, than the beams that gild the glowing vault.
No pause for council need they, no delay,
Nor deep research to sever right from wrong,
Or prove what path their duty bids pursue.
Yet some there are, untaught, who dare contend
Primordial matter ne'er without the gods
Thus, in nice symmetry, to please mankind,
Could form th' alternate seasons, rear the fruits
That gladden life, or urge those gentler joys,
Gay Pleasure, guide, and goddess of the world,

calculation; and that when the earth is nearly in the opposite point of her orbit, the eclipse uniformly appears to take place about eight minutes later than the tables predict them. Hence, it was fairly resolved, that the rays of light consist of small corpuscles, not acting instantaneously, but requiring about 16½ minutes to fly through a space equal to the diameter of the earth's orbit; and that this, amounting to at least 190 millions of miles, the particles of light move at the inconceivable rate of eleven millions of miles in a minute, which is nearly a million times swifter than a cannon ball.

Allowing the materiality of light, it is not foreign to our purpose, in this place, to notice the incomprehensibly small corpuscles of which it is composed. I shall therefore just state, that from many accurate experiments, Dr. Nieuwentyt has computed, that an inch of candle, when converted into light, becomes divided into 269,617,040 parts, with 40 zeros, or ciphers annexed: at which rate, there must issue out of it, when burning, 418,663, with 39 ciphers more, particles in a second of a minute; which is vastly more than a thousand times a thousand million times the number of sands the whole earth can contain, reckoning ten inches to one foot, and that 100 sands are equal to one inch. I have added this observation on the minuteness of the particles of light, to give some faint idea of the inconceivably smaller dimensions of the primal particles of matter; since, according to the Epicurean doctrine, every corpuscle of light is a body compounded of a large number of such particles.

Ver. 172. *Yet some there are, untaught, who dare contend*] The poet here alludes, both to the Stoic system, and the popular theology: the former of which maintained, that the world itself was a divine and intelligent being; and the latter, that it was the production of the gross and feeble gods, that were worshipped by the people at large.

Ver. 177. *Gay* Pleasure, *guide, and goddess of the world,*] Much unjust obloquy has been thrown on our author, and the entire sect of Epicurus, from an ill-founded idea, that the whole of their philosophy consisted in carnal pleasures and indulgences. This idea I have already controverted, in the note on ver. 16, of this book. The assertion, contained in the verse before us, that "Pleasure is the guide, and goddess of the world," was never meant by our

Ut res per Veneris blanditim secla propagent,
Ne genus obcidat humanum : quorum omnia caussâ
Constituisse deos quom fingunt omnibus rebus,
Magno opere a verâ labsei ratione videntur.
Nam, quam vis rerum ignorem primordia, quæ sint,
Hoc tamen ex ipsis cœli rationibus ausim
Confirmare, aliisque ex rebus reddere multis,

---

poet to be applied, in the present instance, to his own sect, but is merely employed as an apophthegm of universal admission and incontrovertible truth. Creech, however, in his Latin edition of the present poem, is of a contrary opinion, and condemns the dogma, thus advanced, as pregnant with audacity and impiety (*audacter* et *impie* affirmat, &c.) But what then, it may be asked, is the uninterrupted object of all human pursuits, if it be not pleasure or happiness? For what other end do mankind either engage in toil, or desist from it altogether? Why, else, do they either cling to life, or free themselves from it by suicide? Why, but from a hope of obtaining some degree, at least, of comparative ease or happiness, or pleasure, or under whatever other title may be ranked

That something, which soul prompts th' eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live, or dare to die?

That the uniform and perpetual pursuit of man is pleasure, is a truth which, if duly considered, cannot but be acknowledged by the severest moralist, and the most gloomy enthusiast. Young, in his "Night Thoughts," therefore, is not more poetical than accurate, when he asserts, that

Pleasure's the mistress of th' etherial powers;
For her contend the rival gods above.
Pleasure's the mistress of the world below:
How would all stagnate, but for Pleasure's ray!
How would the frozen stream of action cease!—
The foes of Epicurus all were fools.

If it be observed, that pleasures vary to infinitude in their kinds and objects; and that, while some may be pure and praise-worthy, others, most certainly, are vile and contemptible—I admit the fact. It is, however, still universally true, that the pursuit of all mankind is pleasure; and it is equally true, that the peculiar species of pleasure encouraged by our poet is, in every respect, consistent with virtue, and the dignity of man. In the present instance, the pleasure immediately referred to by him, is *love*, or *sexual affection*: but surely, it is possible to refer to a passion thus universally seated in the heart of every created being, without incurring the charge either of impiety or impurity. Lucretius, as a poet, deifies this passion, following the example of every poet who preceded him. D'Avenant, in his Gondibert, does the same: and where is the harm in representing the virtuous and temperate soldiers of this prince as yielding to the force of Love, when, in the form of Beauty, they beheld her pass by with her virgin-train? These are his words:

They vayled their ensigns as it by did move,
Whilst inward, as from native conscience, all
*Worshipped the poet's darling goddess* Love,
Which grave philosophers did Nature call.
Gondibert, Cant. i.

Ver. 182. *For, though the rise of things I ne'er could prove,*] This passage of our poet, Sir Richard Blackmore has first translated, and then attempted to answer:

"If I were doubtful of the source and spring
"Whence things arise, I from the skies could bring,

Prompts in the panting breast, lest every tribe
Should fail on earth, the rites of Venus spurn'd.
These from the gods, as sovereign cause of all,
Such sophists trace, wide wand'ring from the truth.
For, though the rise of things I ne'er could prove,
Yet dare I, from the heaven's defective frame,
And many a scene alike perverse, affirm

---

" And every part of nature, proofs to shew
" The world to gods cannot its being owe ;
" So full of faults is all th' unartful frame."—
Thus impotent in sense, though strong in rage
The daring Roman does the gods engage.
CREATION.

But Sir Richard has totally mistaken the meaning of this " daring Roman :" which, indeed, is not very extraordinary, for almost all the commentators have done the same. Far from attacking the eternal intelligence and first cause of all things, in consequence of the moral and physical evils of the world, he accounts for them briefly here, and more fully in the 5th book, by adverting to the nature of matter itself. This, the Epicureans, in common with all the other Greek philosophers, conceived to have been eternal, and uncreated. By its very nature, it is subject to mutability in all its concrete forms ; and from its incessant changes, decompositions, and recombinations, proceed all the evils we meet with in the world. But the intelligent First Cause, not having created matter, of course could not alter its essential tendencies ; he could only endue it with certain powers of motion of which it was susceptible, and thus benevolently draw forth its inactive corpuscles into forms of action and utility, of real, though not of uninterrupted happiness. But had this supreme intelligence created matter himself, it would not, conjectures our poet, have exhibited the evils it exhibits at present. I am confident, therefore, adds he, that the intelligent First Cause could not have created it, and I know whence these evils proceed : were I, however, ignorant of this, and had formed no opinion upon subjects of cosmogony,

Yet dare I from the heaven's defective frame,
And many a scene alike perverse, affirm
No power divine this *mass material* rear'd
With ills so pregnant.

The contrary, as is well known, was generally maintained : for the multitude attributed the absolute creation of all things to the operation of some one or more of their own absurd and inconsistent gods : while, as I have already observed, the Stoic and Platonic philosophers contended, that the world itself was a god, or divine being, endowed with intelligence, and existing from all eternity. Here, indeed, if I mistake not, we meet with much impiety and much absurdity ; and it is against these absurd and impious opinions Lucretius levels his attack.

The origin of moral evil is very unsatisfactorily resolved upon every hypothesis : but the eternity of matter accounts for it far more explicitly than any other system asserted in ancient times, either in Greece or Rome. Happiest he, however, even among ourselves, who resigns this intricate subject altogether ; and, returning with suitable modesty to the paths of common life, directs his views towards a future state for a full explanation of difficulties which, even at present, he cannot surmount. But as the most solid, if not the only, proofs of a future state are deducible from Christianity, the whole, or the greater part of them, could not possibly have been known, either to the Grecian sage or Roman poet. See note on book ii. ver. 1100.

Nequaquam nobis divinitus esse creatam
Naturam mundi: quamquam hæc sint prædita culpâ;
Quæ tibi posterius, Memmi, faciemus aperta:
Nunc id, quod super est, de motibus expediemus.
Nunc locus est, ut opinor, in hiis illud quoque rebus
Confirmare tibi; nullam rem posse suâ vi
Corpoream sursum ferri, sursumque meare.
Nec tibi dent in eo flammarum corpora fraudem;
Sursus enim vorsus gignuntur, et augmina sumunt:
Et sursum nitidæ fruges, arbustaque, crescunt:
Pondera, quantum in se est, quom deorsum cuncta ferantur.
Nec, quom subsiliunt ignes ad tecta domorum,
Et celeri flammâ degustant tigna, trabeisque,
Sponte suâ facere id sine vi subicente putandum est:
Quod genus, e nostro quom missus corpore, sanguis
Emicat, exsultans alte, spargitque cruorem.
Nonne vides etiam, quantâ vi tigna, trabeisque,

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Ver. 186. —*This, in order due*, &c.] Our poet makes good this promise in book v. ver. 206, where he reverts to this subject, and commences it with the four preceding verses.

Ver. 192. *Nor let th' aspiring flame, with specious boast, Heedless deceive thee.*——] The admirer of Cowley will be here reminded of the following couplet:

Go, bid the stones a journey upwards make;
Go, bid th' ambitious flame no more ascend.

Ver. 204. *And springs not thus the pond'rous trunk immers'd*] It is curious to observe how the same facts are sometimes recurred to by philosophers embracing opposite systems, in proof of the truth of the systems that thus differ. The very phænomenon Lucretius has here adverted to in explication of his own theory, Polignac has copied, to demonstrate Des Cartes' hypothesis of a plenum:

No power divine this mass material rear'd
With ills so pregnant. This, in order due,
The muse shall full demonstrate: turn we now
To what of motion yet remains unsung.

And here, O Memmius! mark this precept well;
That nought corporeal, of itself, can e'er
Ascend sublime through regions urg'd above.
Nor let th' aspiring flame, with specious boast,
Heedless deceive thee. True, with upward flight,
E'en from the first, its spreading spires unfold;
And fruits, and plants their growth still upwards urge.
Yet as the weight by all possest, below
Drives all things, deem not thou, when the bright blaze
Flames through th' affrighted house, the crackling roof
Tumbling precipitate, then deem not thou
It mounts spontaneous but from foreign force.
Thus, from the wounded vein, the vital blood
Ascends, and pours its purple strength sublime:
And springs not thus the pond'rous trunk immers'd

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Injice suber aquis immergens, injice ligna;
Ligna petent summum valido connisa natatu,
Prosiliet superas celeri impetu suber ad undas.
Causa rei quænam est? nimirum liquor aquas
Fertur in ima magis quam lignum aut futile suber:
Libramen simul omne petit; depulsaque quantum
Unde suâ superat gravitate hæc corpora, tantum
Debilitant liquidam, cui sunt commissa columnam. lib. 4.

Plunge cork, plunge timber through th' elastic wave:
Back bounds the timber, resolute to swim,
While the light cork, still loftier, tops the tide!
Whence this effect? hence clearly, that the wave
Is urg'd still deeper than the cork or trunk;
That all things claim their level; and that, hence,
As much as o'er such buoyant forms the stream
Triumphs in weight, themselves the stream divide.

Respuat humor aquæ? Non, quo magis ursimus altum
Directâ, et magnâ vi multei pressimus ægre,
Tam cupide sursum revomit magis, atque remittit;
Plus ut parte foras emergant, exsiliantque?
Nec tamen hæc, quantum est in se, dubitamus, opinor,
Quin vacuum per inane deorsum cuncta ferantur,
Sic igitur debent flammæ quoque posse per auras
Aëris, expressæ sursum, subcedere, quamquam
Pondera, quantum in se est, deorsum deducere pugnent.
Nocturnasque faceis, cœli sublime volanteis,
Nonne vides longos flammarum ducere tractus,
In quasquomque dedit parteis natura meatum?
Non cadere in terrâ stellas, et sidera, cernis?
Sol etiam summo de vortice dissupat omneis
Ardorem in parteis, et lumine conserit arva;

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Ver. 212. —*Falls not, at night,*
*The mimic star, the meteor trailing long*
*Its line of fire*, &c.——] This beautiful passage of our poet has not been passed by heedlessly by Virgil or Manilius, both of whom have introduced a close imitation of it into their respective poems. In the Georgics of the former, we therefore read,

Sæpe etiam *stellas*, vento impendente, videbis
*Præcipites* cœlo *labi*, *noctisque per umbram*
*Flammarum longos* à tergo albescere *tractus*.
lib. i.

The seeming stars fall headlong from the skies,
And shoot *athwart the darkness of the night*,
With sweeping glories, and *long trails of light*.
Dryden.

To the same effect, we meet with, in Manilius,

Præcipites stellæ passimque volare videntur
Cum vaga per liquidum scintillant lumina mundum,
Et tenuem longis jaculantur crinibus ignem;
Excurruntque procul, volucres imitata sagittas,
*Albida* dum gracili tennatur semita filo. lib. i.

The common editions of this passage of Manilius, in the last line, for *albida* read *arida*. I have transcribed it, with Mr. Wakefield's very pertinent emendation, which must, I think, obtain the sanction of every critic: and is altogether consonant with the *albescere* of Virgil, in the passage quoted above. Thomson has retained the very same image in his description of the same phænomenon, which, it is probable, he borrowed from Lucretius or Virgil:

Seen through the turbid fluctuating air,
The stars, obtuse, emit a shiver'd ray;

In the clear stream, rejected by the wave?
Though deep we plunge it, with redoubled force
Still back it bounds, and, o'er th' elastic tide,
Rears half its solid bulk. Yet doubt we not,
Spite of such facts, that all things, uncontrol'd,
Through space tend downward. From control alone
The lambent flame thus mounts, tow'rds heav'n impell'd,
Else prone from native weight. Falls not, at night,
The mimic star, the meteor trailing long
Its line of fire, whene'er, amid the gloom,
Th' elastic ether opes the needed path?
The mid-day sun flings down his rays direct
And sows the fields with light: and the dread flash,

---

Or frequent seem to *shoot athwart the gloom*,
And *long* behind them *trail* the WHITENING blaze.
WINTER, ver. 126.

In like manner, Mr. Cumberland, in a passage which forms part of the description of Satan, after his overthrow by our Saviour:

High in mid-air, swift on the level wing,
Northward he shoots, and, *like a comet, leaves*
*Long fiery tracks behind.* CALVARY.

Milton had, long before, employed a similar image to delineate the flight of Uriel. Par. Lost, iv. 555.

So Escoiquiz, in his Mexico Conquistada, Cant. iv.

Nightly we see those strange and dreadful *stars*
*Trail* o'er our wretched town *their length of fire*.

These meteors were formerly conceived to be exhalations from mineral substances raised into the air by subterranean heat: and philosophers of every age, from the time of Aristotle, have deemed it their duty to investigate, and endeavour to account for their origin, in order to disperse the apprehensions with which they have inspired the vulgar of almost every nation, from Hindustan to Europe and America. The philosophy of modern times, however, has been more fortunate in its researches, than the ancient schools. Beccaria has proved, almost to a certainty, that the falling star is a mere electric phænomenon; and Volta has conjectured, with a high degree of probability, that the meteor, denominated ignis fatuus, or will-o'-the-whisp, is nothing more than an exhalation of hydrogen, or inflammable gass, from the surface of bogs, fens, and other putrescent bodies, conflagrated by the electricity of the atmosphere; most generally, perhaps, by the falling star itself.

In terras igitur quoque solis vergitur ardor.
Transvorsosque volare per imbreis fulmina cernis:
Nunc heic, nunc illic, abruptei nubibus, ignes
Concursant; cadit in terras vis flammea volgo.
Illud in hiis quoque te rebus cognoscere avemus:
Corpora, quom deorsum rectum, per inane, feruntur,
Ponderibus propriis incerto tempore ferme,
Incertisque locis, spatio depellere paullum:
Tantum, quod minumum mutatum dicere possis.
Quod, nisi declinare solerent, omnia deorsum,
Imbris utei guttæ, caderent per inane profundum;

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Ver. 217. *And sows the fields with light ——:*] In the same manner, our unrivalled Milton:

Now morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, *sowed the earth with orient pearl.*
Par. Lost, b. v. ver. 1.

Gesner has caught the same metaphor, and has frequently introduced it into his Death of Abel. Thus, in book i. Die untergehende sonne *streute* unausprechlichen *glanz* über sie hin. "The descending sun *sowed ineffable lustre* all over it." The bold, and beautiful language of the Psalmist, contains, in many places, a similar image. Thus, xcvii. 11.

*Light is sown* on the righteous,
And gladness on the upright of heart.

But, perhaps, the most daring use of this figure, at least in modern times, occurs in the eclogues of Garcilago de la Vega:

Aves! que aqui *sembrais vuestras querellas!*
Birds! in these woods your soft *complaints who sow!*

Ver. 217. —*and the dread flash,*
*When thunder rends the skies, though wide it dart,*] Nothing can be more natural or more beautiful than this short description of a thunder-storm. That of Thomson, which immediately precedes his episode of Celadon and Amelia, has been much, and deservedly admired. I insert, therefore, the parallel passage, for a comparison with Lucretius:

*Wide rent, the clouds*
*Pour a whole flood,* and yet, its flame unquench'd,
Th' unconquerable lightning *struggles through,*
Ragged and fierce, or in red whirling balls,
And *fires the mountains* with redoubled rage.
Summer, 1145.

Ercilla is equally natural and picturesque. He has obviously copied from Lucretius, and with a masterly hand:

Agua rezia, granizo, piedra espessa
Las intrica das nuves despendian,
Rayos, huenos, relampagos apriessa
*Rompen los cielos y la tierra abrian.*
Araucan. Cant. ix.

From clashing clouds their mingl'd torrents gush,
And rain and hail with rival fury rush,

When thunder rends the skies, though wide it dart,
Now here, now there, amid the rushing rain,
Its forky fires—spends its chief strength on earth.

This, too, regard intent: that primal seeds,
When down direct their potent path they urge,
In time uncertain, and uncertain space,
Oft from the right decline—yet so minute
Veer they, no fancy less can e'er conceive.
Without this devious curve primordial seeds
Would drop successive, like the crystal show'r,

---

Bolts of loud thunder, floods of *lightning rend*
*Th' opening skies*, and *into earth descend*. HAYLEY.

Ver. 221. *This, too, regard intent: that primal seeds,*] The passage answering to this, and the four following verses, and comprizing the same number of lines in the original, is dispatched in two verses alone in Creech's translation, and is of course most incorrectly and unfaithfully rendered. It is given thus:

Now seeds in downward motion must decline,
Though very little from th' exactest line.

He has totally omitted, as his commentator has justly observed, the

——incerto tempore ferme
Incertisque locis——

In time uncertain, and uncertain space

of Lucretius, though an expression of the utmost consequence in the position advanced, and on the imagined truth of which all its advantage depends. The version of Marchetti is far more accurate in this respect;

D'uopo è ch' in tempo incerto, in luogo incerto, &c.

I have already observed, in the note on ver. 63 of the present Book, that this third, or oscillatory mode of motion, was the entire invention of Epicurus; and was an improvement, as he apprehended, upon the old atomic philosophy, chiefly for the purpose of accounting for the moral liberty of intelligent beings: although he likewise contended, that from such oscillation alone proceeded the greater part of the conjunctions, unions, and adhesions of atoms to atoms; which, if the whole descended in a path strictly rectilinear, could not often take place, and of course the world not exist, as at present. "Deinde," observes Cicero, "ibidem homo acutus cum illud occurreret, si omnia deorsum e regione ferrentur, et, ut dixi, ad lineam, nunquam fore ut atomus altera alteram posset attingere: itaque attulit rem commentitiam: declinare dixit atomum perpaulum, quo nihil posset fieri minus. Ita effici copulationes et complexiones et adhæsiones atomorum inter se, ex quo efficeretur mundus, omnesque partes mundi, quæque in eo sunt." lib. 1. de Fin.—Our poet will be found to apply this theory to the abstruse subject of moral liberty, in the passage commencing at ver. 257, of the present book, as he does to the combination and generation of physical bodies, at ver. 226.

Nec foret obfensus natus, nec plaga creata
Principiis; ita nihil umquam natura creasset.
Quod, si forte aliquis credit graviora potesse
Corpora, quo citius rectum per inane feruntur,
Incidere ex supero levioribus, atque ita plagas
Gignere, quæ possint genitaleis reddere motus;
Avius a verâ longe ratione recedit.
Nam, per aquas quæquomque cadunt atque aëra deorsum
Hæc pro ponderibus casus celerare necesse est:
Propterea, quia corpus aquæ naturaque tenuis
Aëris haud possunt æque rem quamque morari;
Sed citius cedunt, gravioribus exsuperata.
At contra nulli, de nullâ parte, neque ullo
Tempore, inane potest vacuum subsistere rei;
Quin, sua quod natura petit, concedere pergat.
Omnia quapropter debent per inane quietum
Æque, ponderibus non æquis, concita ferri.

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Ver. 230. *If then, there be, who deem the seeds of things*] Nothing can be more true to the philosophic facts and experiments of the present day, than the reasoning and observations of our poet, contained in the passage extending from the present to ver. 247. And it is truly astonishing to observe how accurately he has anticipated the gravitation of Newton, and the decisions of Boyle upon the air-pump. It is a palpable error, observes he, to suppose that bodies, falling in a perfect vacuum, differ in the degree of their velocity; such difference proceeding entirely from the variation of the density or tenuity of the medium through which they move, and the solidity of the moving body.—Thus, in the exhausted receiver of an air-pump, a guinea and a feather, one of the heaviest, and one of the lightest bodies we are acquainted with, descend with equal rapidity, or, as our poet most accurately expresses it,

——in equal time
Through the blank void, unequal weights descend
Of every fancied variance.

Gravity, observes Sir Isaac Newton, equally affects all bodies, without regard either to their bulk or figure, and exists in proportion to their quantity of matter; so that all bodies consist of matter equally

Void of all contest, all re-active blow,
Whence nature sole her world of wonders works.
If, then, there be, who deem the seeds of things
More pond'rous, as their rectilinear course
Speeds through the void, the lighter soon may reach,
And thus the repercussive war commence,—
Far err they from the truth. For though, when urg'd
Through the pure air, or clear translucent wave,
Doubtless, all pond'rous forms more swift descend;
This, from the variance of resistance sole,
Flows, by such fluids form'd 'gainst things unlike,
The grosser quick-o'erpow'ring. But pure space,
In every part, in every hour the same,
Throughout resists not, the demanded path
Yielding submissive. Hence, in equal time,
Through the blank void, unequal weights descend
Of every fancied variance: and hence, too,

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heavy. It is the very philosophy of Lucretius, and expressed in nearly the same terms. All the arguments, therefore of Des Cartes, Polignac, and even the earlier adherents among the Greeks to the doctrine of a plenum, when urged on this subject, are as much addressed to the philosophy of Newton as of Epicurus, and are answered in the same manner.—If there be any difficulty in conceiving the origin of gravitation, or the power of attraction between body and body, when at a distance from each other, and when we are incapable of discerning any medium of communication, there is certainly a much greater difficulty in conceiving, as Lucretius has justly observed in the former book, how motion of any sort could ever be generated, if the whole of nature were full of matter equally solid. There is a much greater difficulty in conceiving, with Des Cartes, that a body descends from above by propulsion, or because the atmosphere is already so crowded with material substances, that it cannot admit the entrance of any thing projected towards it,—than in conceiving, with Lucretius, that it descends by the possession of universal gravity; or, according to Newton, by the property of mutual attraction, which is the cause of such gravity. For a fuller account of the different doctrines that have been occasionally maintained on this subject, I refer the reader to the note on ver. 1065, of the present book.

Haud igitur poterunt levioribus incidere umquam
Ex supero graviora, neque ictus gignere per se,
Quei varient motus, per quos natura gerat res.
Quâ re etiam atque etiam paullum inclinare necesse est
Corpora, nec plus quam minumum; ne fingere motus
Obliquos videamur, et id res vera refutet.
Namque hoc in promptu, manifestumque, esse videmus;
Pondera, quantum in se est, non posse obliqua meare,
Ex supero quom præcipitant, quod cernere possis.
Sed nihil omnino rectâ regione viaï
Declinare, quis est, qui possit cernere, sese
Denique, si semper motus connectitur omnis,
Et veteri exoritur semper novus ordine certo;
Nec declinando faciunt primordia motûs
Principium quoddam, quod fati fœdera rumpat,
Ex infinito ne caussam caussa sequatur:
Libera per terras unde hæc animantibus exstat,
Unde est hæc, inquam, fatis avolsa, voluntas,

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Ver. 252. —*whence, resolve,*
*Flows through the world this freedom of the mind?*] This question may as pertinently be asked in the present day, as in the age of Lucretius: for, although the Epicurean solution of it be very far indeed from satisfactory, and is, in some respects, even puerile, it still remains an undecided and perplexing proposition. Unquestionably, the mind is subject to as regular a chain of motives, volitions, and actions, as the natural world is to that of causes and effects. But to maintain with Bayle, Hume, and Priestley, that the necessity hence accruing is precisely the same, derived from the same source, and operating by the same system of laws, appears contrary both to facts and legitimate ratiocination. There is an argument advanced in Dr. Gregory's Dissertation on this subject, which I do not think has met with all the attention to which it is entitled.—A body placed

The grosser ne'er the lighter urg'd below
Can gain, triumphant; or the contest rouse
Whence spring new motions, and all nature lives.
Hence doubly flows it why the seeds of things
Should from the right decline; yet, in degree,
The least conceptibly, lest we should deem
The line oblique which nature ne'er assumes.
For nought more obvious, as the sight confirms,
Than that all weights, their downward course at will
Steering, obliquely never can descend;
But what keen sight of man can prove precise
That the swift cadence ne'er declines at all?
Had all one motion uniform, the new
Th' anteriour skilful copying, if throughout
Primordial seeds declin'd not, rousing hence
Fresh springs of action, potent to subvert
The bonds of fate, and break the rigid chain
Of cause on cause, eternal,—whence, resolve,
Flows through the world this freedom of the mind?

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in a central point, between two powers of equal and opposite attractions, must remain at rest for ever. Allowing these opposite powers to be situate north and south, it may, nevertheless, be propelled east or west; and, in that case, would proceed in a line perfectly direct. But if we change the relative positions of the attracting powers, and place them north and east; and at the same time propel the body from the same central point, it would not proceed either due north or due east, but would mark out a new course for itself immediately between the two points, and so fly off at an angle of 22½ degrees. But no moral instance can be adduced parallel to either of these cases in physics. No proof can be brought of the mind's continuing for ever in a state of total inaction, merely because the motives operating upon it are precisely equal and opposite: nor, while we cannot even imagine that in cases in which the motives, although not

Per quam progredimur, quo ducit quemque voluptas;
Declinamus item motus, nec tempore certo,
Nec regione loci certâ, sed uti ipsa tulit mens?
Nam, dubio procul, hiis rebus sua quoique voluntas
Principium dat; et hinc motus per membra rigantur.
Nonne vides etiam, patefactis tempore puncto
Carceribus, non posse tamen prorumpere equorum
Vim cupidam tam de subito, quam mens avet ipsa?
Omnis enim totum per corpus materiaï
Copia conquiri debet, concita per artus
Omneis, ut studium mentis connexa sequatur:
Ut videas initum motûs a corde creari,
Ex animique voluntate id procedere primum;
Inde dari porro per totum corpus, et artus.

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diametrically opposite, are at variance in their direction, and cannot both be complied with at the same time, that a line altogether different, and immediately between the two, would be the necessary result; and that a man who had an equal inclination to walk from Lincoln's-inn to Highgate, and to Mile-end, should be compelled, if he moved at all, to proceed to Hackney as a point nearly between the two. These are situations, as Montagne has justly remarked, that never can occur with respect to the mind: but they are facts which are daily occurring with respect to the exterior world, and which, in consequence, clearly elucidate, that a difference exists between them; a difference, as Lucretius observes, between mental motives, and material causation,—between moral and physical necessity.

Ver. 270. *Dost thou not see, as down the barrier drops*
*That reins the racer,* &c.——] This beautiful picture of the unquenchable ardour of the race-horse, admirably heightened by the abruptness of the question which presents him immediately before us, is copied from our poet by Virgil in a variety of instances, and is also imitated by Statius.

Thus Georg. i. 512. but more particularly

*Nonne vides*, quum præcipiti certamine campum
Corripuere, ruuntque, effusi *carcere* currus——?
Georg. iii. 103.

*Dost thou not see*, as down the barrier drops,
How, in rash strife, the rival cars contend
Swift bursting o'er the plains?

This power to act, though fate the deed forbid,
Urg'd by the will alone? The free-born mind
Acts, or forbears, spontaneous; its own time,
Its place, alike uncertain: these the will,
Doubtless, alone determines, and, at once,
Flies the fleet motion through th' assenting frame.
Dost thou not see, as down the barrier drops
That reins the racer, instant though he dart,
Not half so instant darts he as his soul
Ambitious covets? Deep through all his frame
Th' elastic nerves must first the wish convey
Ere yet the consentaneous flight succeed.
Hence, obvious, springs all motion from the heart,
Rous'd by the mind's resolve, and instant urg'd
Through every nerve, through every quiv'ring limb.

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Qui dominis, idem ardor equis; face lumina surgunt;
Ora sonant morsu; spumisque et sanguine, ferrum
Uritur: impulsi nequeunt obsistere postes,
Claustraque compressæ transfumat anhelitus iræ:
Stare adeo miserum est, pereunt vestigia mille
Ante fugam; absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum.

STAT. THEB. vi. 390.

As pants the master, pants alike the horse:
Flames are his eyes; his champing mouth resounds;
With blood and foam the bit burns; the strained goal
In vain opposes, and its smoaking bars
Rehale the vapour of his smother'd ire.
So vast the toil to stand! a thousand steps
Die ere the contest, and his eager hoof
Strikes, as though loosen'd, the far distant plain.

There can be little doubt that Pope had this vigorous passage of Lucretius or Statius in his recollection, when he compiled the following verses:

Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,
And, pawing, seems to beat the distant plain;
Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost,
And, ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.

WINDSOR FOREST.

M. Delille has also imitated this passage successfully in his L'Homme des Champs.

Nec simile est, ut quom, inpulsei, procedimus ictu,
Viribus alterius magnis, magnoque coactu ;
Nam tum materiem totius corporis omnem
Perspicuum est nobis invitis ire, rapique,
Donec eam refrenavit per membra voluntas.
Jamne vides igitur, quamquam vis extera multos
Pellat, et invitos cogat procedere sæpe,
Præcipitesque rapi ; tamen esse in pectore nostro
Quiddam, quod contra pugnare, obstareque, possit :
Quoius ad arbitrium quoque copia materiaï
Cogitur interdum flecti per membra, per artus ;
Et projecta refrenatur, retroque residit ?
Quâ re, in seminibus quoque idem fateare, necesse est ;
Esse aliam, præter plagas et pondera, caussam
Motibus, unde hæc est ollis innata potestas :
De nihilo quoniam fieri nihil posse videmus.
Pondus enim prohibet, ne plagis omnia fiant,
Externâ quasi vi : sed, ne mens ipsa necessum
Intestinum habeat cunctis in rebus agundis,
Et devicta quasi, cogatur ferre, patique ;
Id facit exiguum clinamen principiorum,
Nec regione loci certâ, nec tempore certo.
Nec stipata magis fuit umquam materiaï
Copia, nec porro majoribus intervallis :
Nam neque adaugescit quidquam, neque deperit inde.

A force far different this than e'er prevails
When aught without coërces. Passive, then,
Bends all the frame th' extrinsic power beneath,
Borne down reluctant; till th' awakening will
Unchains each member, and resumes her right.
For oft, though foreign force, with tyrant sway,
Rule us, resistless, headlong hurrying down—
Say—lurks no adverse something in the breast
Proud to withstand? full oft, at whose control,
Swift flows the nervous tide from limb to limb,
Bursting each bond—and, oft, as swift, retires?
Hence firm maintain we primal seeds some cause
Must feel of rising motion unbestow'd
By weight, or blow re-active, whence alone
Upsprings this secret power by man possest:
Nought forming nought, as reason proves precise.
For weight forbids the credence that alone
Things by re-action move; yet, lest the mind
Bend to a stern necessity within,
And, like a slave, determine but by force,—
Though urg'd by weight, in time, in place unfixt,
Each primal atom trivial still declines.

Nor interstitial more, nor more compact,
Was e'er this frame of matter; nor augment
Primæval seeds, nor e'er admit decay.

Quapropter, quo nunc in motu principiorum
Corpora sunt, in eodem ante actâ ætate fuere,
Et posthac semper simili ratione ferentur:
Et, quæ consuerint gigni, gignentur eâdem
Conditione; et erunt, et crescent, inque valebunt,
Quantum quoique datum est per fœdera naturaï:
Nec rerum summam conmutare ulla potest vis.
Nam, neque quo possit genus ullum materiaï
Ecfugere ex omni, quidquam est; neque, rursus, in omne
Unde coorta queat nova vis inrumpere, et omnem
Naturam rerum mutare, et vortere motus.
Illud in hiis rebus non est mirabile, quâ re,
Omnia quom rerum primordia sint in motu,
Summa tamen summâ videatur stare quiete;
Præter quam si quid proprio dat corpore motus.
Omnis enim longe nostris ab sensibus infra
Primorum natura jacet: quapropter, ubi ipsam
Cernere jam nequeas, motus quoque surpere debent:
Præsertim, quom, quæ possimus cernere, celent
Sæpe tamen motus, spatio diducta locorum.
Nam sæpe in colli, tondentes pabula læta,

---

Ver. 325. *From glebe to glebe, where'er, impearl'd with dew,*
*The jocund clover calls them,*] We cannot but be here reminded of that elegant and picturesque passage of Milton, in which the same imagery is introduced:

——from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous *dews*, and find the ground
Cover'd with *pearly-grain*. Par. Lost, i. 430.

Hence every movement in anterior time
That e'er subsisted, still subsists the same,
And will through endless ages: all begot
Begotten must be, punctual to their kinds,
Exist, increase, and perish; following firm
The laws by nature fram'd; nor aught of power,
Act where it may, can change th' entire of things.
For nought expands of spot where primal seeds
From the vast whole may fly; or e'er afresh,
Arm'd with new powers, re-enter, adverse thus
To nature's plans, disorganizing all.
Nor this stupendous that, though primal seeds
Move on incessant, and, through different forms,
Rouse different actions, the vast whole to sense
Rests undisturb'd. For far beyond all ken,
Lies the prime base impalpable of things.
As this eludes all vision, so, alike,
Its motion too elude. E'en oft the sight
No motion marks where still the moving scene
Springs obvious, by the distance sole conceal'd.—
The fleecy flocks, o'er yonder hill that browze
From glebe to glebe, where'er, impearl'd with dew,

---

Thus, again:
—*Stars* of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
*Impearls* on every leaf and every flower. v. 746.

The comparison of dew-drops to pearls, or gems, is beautifully delicate, and has seldom been forgotten by poets of any nation, whenever they have had an

Lanigeræ reptant pecudes, quo quamque vocantes
Invitant herbæ, gemmantes rore recenti;
Et satiatei agnei ludunt, blandeque coruscant: 320
Omnia quæ nobis longe confusa videntur,
Et veluti in viridi candor consistere colli.
Præterea, magnæ legiones quom loca cursu
Camporum conplent, belli simulacra cientes;

---

opportunity of introducing it. The following, of the cardinal Polignac, is probably copied from Lucretius, whose unrivalled poetry he was as anxious to imitate, as his principles he was studious to oppose:

Jamque laborati duro sub cortice succi
Erumpunt; frondemque et flores, ordine miro,
Implicitos, unctæ monstrant in acumine gemmæ.
Anti-Lucr. iv. 797.

Th' elaborate juices from the tough bark now
Burst forth; and flowers and foliage, wond'rous wove,
Gleam from each pearly budlet.

A passage, to the same effect, is to be found in Dyer's Fleece, a poem by no means deficient in classical allusions, and pregnant with picturesque paintings, drawn with a master's hand from nature:

——wait till all
The *crystal dews impearl'd* upon the grass
Are touch'd by Phœbus' beams, and mount aloft.

The term *crystal* is, with equal felicity, applied by Ovid to the frost that, in the same manner, is scattered every morning over trees and fields, in the earlier spring:

Tempus erat *vitreâ* quo primum terra *pruinâ*
Spargitur, et tectæ fronde queruntur aves.

This couplet of Ovid is imitated by Ariosto, in his Orlando Furioso; and it is somewhat singular, that Mr. Hoole, in his translation of both poets, has made use of the phrase glittering and sparkling *dew*, instead of glittering or *crystal frost*.

Fin che l' Aurora e la *gelata brina*
Dalle dorate ruote in terra *sparse*,
E s'udir le Alcione, &c. Cant. x.

Till, from her golden wheels, Aurora threw
On verdant meads the drops of *sparkling dew*,
And on the margin of the wavy flood
Alcyone her ancient plaints renew'd. Hoole.

In his version of the above passage of Ovid, he has, with a similar error, written

Now earth first glitters with the morning *dew*,
And birds, in bow'ry shades, their plaints renew.

Calpurnius, in his fifth eclogue, has a few verses so extremely consentaneous with the imagery of Lucretius, more especially when accompanied with the classical amendment of Mr. Wakefield, that I should be guilty of an unpardonable omission, if I were to pass them by:

——ante diem pecus exeat: humida dulces
Efficit aura cibos, quoties, *fugientibus umbris*,
Frigida nocturno tinguuntur pascua *rore*,
Et matutinæ lucent in gramine gemmæ. Ver. 52.

Lead forth betimes thy cattle; the moist air
Sweetens the herbage; lead them when, the shades
Fast flying, the cool glebe is thick *besprent*
With midnight *dew-drops*; and the *gems* of morn
*Gleam* o'er the greensward.——

Ver. 330. *One white mass forming o'er the verdant steep.*] So, Dyer:

Such are the downs of Banstead, edg'd with woods,
And tow'ry villas; such Dorcestrian fields,
Whose flocks innum'rous *whiten all the land.*
Fleece.

The jocund clover calls them, and the lambs
That round them gambol, saturate with milk,
Proving their frontlets in the mimic fray—
Press, at this distance, on the sight confus'd,
One white mass forming o'er the verdant steep.
Thus, too, when warlike squadrons crowd the field,
Horrent in arms, with horses scarce restrain'd,

---

The idea of thus *cloathing*, or covering the verdant glebe with the reflected whiteness of the flocks that feed on it, is highly beautiful and picturesque. So Psalm lxv. 13.

The pastures are *cloathed* with flocks.

Ver. 331. *Thus, too, when warlike squadrons crowd the field,*
*Horrent in arms, with horses scarce restrain'd,* &c.] The whole passage is manifestly deduced from the Iliad of Homer, though, in some degree, enlarged and improved:

Αιγλη δ' ουρανον ικε· γελασσε δε πασα περι χθων
Χαλκου υπο στεροπης· υπο δε κτυπος ωρυτο ποσσιν
Ανδρων. T. 362.

Broad glittering breast-plates, spears with pointed rays
Mix in one stream, reflecting blaze on blaze;
Thick beats the centre as the coursers bound,
With splendour flame the skies, and laugh the fields around. Pope.

In Hesiod's *Shield of Hercules*, we, in like manner, meet with the following animated and parallel passage:

Ευρε γαρ εν τεμενει εκατηβολου Απολλωνος
Αυτον, και πατερ' υν, Αρην, αυτον πολεμοιο,
Τειχεσι λαμπομενους, στελας ως πυρος αιθομενοιο,
Εσταοτ' εν διφρω· χθονα δ' εκτυπον ωκεες ιπποι,
Νυσσοντες χηλησι· κονις δε σφ' αμφιδεδηει
Κοπτομενη, πλεκτοισιν ὑφ' αρμασι, και ποσιν ιππων.

Him in Apollo's sacred grove he found,
Him, and his sire, the god who thirsts for war:
Glitt'ring in arms, the martial car they fill'd
With blaze of brightest flame. Their rapid steeds
Beat the firm ground, reverberating loud:
While clouds of dust play round them, upwards urg'd
By the fleet coursers and the whirling wheels.

Towards the latter part of this description of Lucretius, it is probable Virgil had his eye directed, when, describing the battle between the Trojans and the Latins, he wrote

——tum cæco pulvere campus
Miscetur, pulsuque pedum tremit excita tellus.
Æneid xii. v. 444.

Dust blinds the battle-field, and the vext earth
Shakes with the tread of hoofs, rebounding wide.

This is the more likely, because there can be no doubt, that he has borrowed the imagery of the earlier part of the picture before us, on another occasion; though I see no notice taken of the copy, in any of the commentaries upon either poet. In Lucretius it occurs thus, ver. 323.

Præterea, magnæ legiones quom loca cursu
Camporum conplent, belli simulacra cientes;
Fulgur ubi ad cœlum se tollit, totaque circum
Ære renidescit tellus, &c.

Virgil expresses himself in this manner:

Ut sæpe *ingenti belli quom* longa cohortes
Explicuit *legio*, et *campo* stetit agmen aperto,
Directæque acies, ac late *fluctuat omnis*
*Ære renidenti tellus*, &c.

Fulgur ubi ad cœlum se tollit, totaque circum
Ære renidescit tellus; subterque, virûm vi,
Excitur pedibus sonitus, clamoreque montes
Ictei rejectant voces ad sidera mundi;
Et circum volitant equites, mediosque repente
Transmittunt, valido quatientes inpete, campos:
Et tamen est quidam locus altis montibus, unde
Stare videntur; et in campis consistere fulgur.
Nunc age, jam deinceps cunctarum exordia rerum,
Qualia sint, et quam longe distantia formis,
Percipe; multigenis quam sint variata figuris:

---

As when the legion o'er the plain afar
Unfolds its spreading cohorts rang'd for war;
When, opposite in arms, the squadrons stand,
And gleaming steel wide waves o'er all the land, &c.
Sotheby.

The narrow space to which the Spartans were confined at the battle of Thermopylæ, has not allowed our own countryman, Glover, to introduce the latter part of the imagery selected by Virgil; but he has thus described the former:

As o'er the main
In lucid rows the rising waves reflect
The sun's effulgence, so the Grecian helms
Return'd his light, which o'er their convex pour'd,
And scatter'd splendour on the dancing plumes.
Leonidas, b. iv.

It may not be unentertaining to my readers, to have an opportunity of comparing, with these descriptions, a somewhat parallel passage in the Spanish poet Lope de Vega. He is painting a rencountre between the Spaniards and the Moors; and the richness of dress, exhibited by both parties, enables him to introduce an original simile.

Como en el triangular cristal se mira.
De varios y diversos tornasoles,
Campo, cielo, ciudad, o mar; y admira
Ver tan diversos nubes, y arreboles;
Assi la esquadra que entra y se retira,
De Moros Africanos, y Españoles
A la vista, que juntos confundian,
Jardin florido en Mayo parecian.
Hermosura de Angelica, Cant. i.

As in the crystal prism th' observer views
Heaven, earth, and ocean blend their various hues,
And crowded towns—while still the splendours fly
Still flit, perpetual, through each rain-bow dye—
Advancing thus, thus yielding o'er the plain,
The Moorish squadrons blend, and pride of Spain;
Thus intermingled, in confus'd array,
Rich as a garden in the month of May.

This description is, for aught I know, original; but I must not omit to quote the close and beautiful copy from Lucretius, that occurs in the third Canto of the Lusiad, and affords us, in the Portuguese,

Shaking the solid glebe, while the bright pomp
Flames through the skies, and gilds the glowing earth,
While groans the ground beneath their mighty tread,
And hills, and heavens re-echo to their shouts—
View'd from afar, the splendid scene that spreads
Seems void of motion, to the fields affixt.

Come, now, my friend, and, next, perspicuous mark
What countless shapes primordial seeds assume,
How vast their variance: for, though myriads swarm

---

at least, a most admirable specimen of imitative harmony:

Mas ja cos escadrões da gente armada,
Os Eborenses campos vão qualhados
Lustra co sol arnes, a lança; a espada
Vam rinchando os cavallos jaezados:
A canora trombeta embandeirada
Os coraçoes â paz acostumados:
Vay as fulgentes armos incitando
Pellas concavidades retumbando.

The glittering squadrons march in proud array;
On burnish'd shields the trembling sun-beams play:
The blaze of arms the warlike rage inspires,
And wakes, from slothful peace, the hero's fires.
With trampling hoofs Evora's plains rebound,
And sprightly neighings echo far around;
Far on each side the clouds of dust arise,
The drum's rough rattling rolls along the skies;
The trumpet's shrilly clangour sounds alarms,
And each heart burns, and ardent pants for arms.
MICKLE.

The glittering pomp that is reflected from the arms of the warriors, is not forgotten in the well-known ballad of Chevy Chace:

Wher syx and thirtte Skottish knyghtes
On a day wear beaten down;
Glen-dale glytteryde with ther armor bryghte
Over castill, towar, and town.

But, above all, ought we to bear in mind that sublime description of Milton, in his Paradise Lost:

He spake, and, to confirm his words, outflew
Millions of *flaming* swords, &c. B. i. 663.

Whence, doubtless, Mr. Burke's bold and figurative description relative to the late queen of France.

Ver. 340. *What countless shapes primordial seeds assume,*] Having established the solidity, and consequent weight of atoms, together with their different modes of motion, our philosophic poet now proceeds to develope another of their properties; to wit, their variation of size and figure. This, though not a subject of ocular demonstration, he endeavours to establish by a variety of forcible arguments and analogies. Epicurus, in a variety of passages, but more especially in his epistle to Herodotus, had long before advanced the same doctrine: Τα ατομα των ιδεων και μεσα, ἐξ ων τε αι συγκρισεις γινονται, &c.

Non, quo multa parum simili sint prædita formâ,
Sed quia non volgo paria omnibus omnia constant.
Nec mirum: nam, quom sit eorum copia tanta,
Ut neque finis, utei docui, neque summa sit ulla;
Debent nimirum non omnibus omnia prorsum
Esse pari filo, similique adfecta figurâ.
Præterea, genus humanum, mutæque natantes
Squamigerûm pecudes, et læta armenta, feræque,
Et variæ volucres, lætantia quæ loca aquarum
Concelebrant, circum ripas funtisque, lacûsque;
Et, quæ pervolgant nemora avia pervolitantes:
Quorum unum quod vis generatim sumere perge;
Invenies tamen inter se differre figuris.
Nec ratione aliâ proles cognoscere matrem,
Nec mater posset prolem: quod posse videmus;
Nec minus, atque homines, inter se nota cluere.
Nam sæpe ante deûm vitulus delubra decora
Turicremas propter mactatus concidit aras,
Sanguinis exspirans calidum de pectore flumen:
At mater, virideis saltus orbata peragrans,

---

Ver. 357. *Thus oft before the sacred shrine, perfum'd*
*With breathing frankincense, th' unweeting calf* ]
The whole of this description is inimitably exquisite, and the reader requires no criticism to make him feel its numerous and appropriate beauties. Of this Statius was fully sensible, and he has thus copied it:

Non secus ac, primo fraudatum lacte, juvencum,
Cui trepidæ vires, et solus ab ubere sanguis,
Seu fera, seu duras avexit pastor ad aras:
Nunc vallem spoliata parens, nunc flumina questu,
Nunc arbusta movet; vacuosque interrogat agros;

Of equal figures, oft unlike they meet.
Nor wond'rous this, since, such th' abundance form'd,
No bounds can chain, no numbers e'er compute.
Hence, not unfrequent, each from each, through space,
Must meet diverse, unkindred in their frames.

Thus nature varies; man, and brutal beast,
And herbage gay, and silver fishes mute,
And all the tribes of heav'n, o'er many a sea,
Through many a grove that wing, or urge their song
Near many a bank of fountain, lake, or rill,
Search where thou wilt, each differs in his kind,
In form, in figure differs. Hence alone,
Knows the fond mother her appropriate young,
Th' appropriate young their mother, mid the brutes,
As clear discern'd as man's sublimer race.
Thus oft before the sacred shrine, perfum'd
With breathing frankincense, th' affrighted calf
Pours o'er the altar, from his breast profound,
The purple flood of life. But wand'ring wild
O'er the green sward, the dam, bereft of hope,

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Tunc piget ire domum, mæstoque novissima campo
Exit, et appositas impasta avertitur herbas.
Theb. lib. vi. 186.

As when the calf, defrauded first of milk,
Of tottering limb, and all his life-blood drawn
From the sweet udder, some voracious beast
Seizes, or cruel swain for rites divine;—
The dam, bereft, now fills the vallies, now
The floods, the woodlands, with her loud laments,
Her young demanding of each desert spot.
Slow treads she homewards—slow—but, once arriv'd,
Flies the sad scene, and spurns th' untasted grass.

Linquit humi pedibus vestigia pressa bisulcis ;
Omnia convisens oculis loca, si queat usquam
Conspicere amissum fetum : conpletque querelis
Frundiferum nemus, adsistens ; et crebra revisit
Ad stabulum, desiderio perfixa juvenci.
Nec teneræ salices, atque herbæ, rore vigentes,
Fluminaque illa queunt, summis labentia ripis,
Oblectare animum, subitamque avortere curam :
Nec vitulorum aliæ species par pabula læta
Derivare queunt animum, curamque levare :
Usque adeo quiddam proprium, notumque requirit.
Præterea, tenerei tremulis cum vocibus hædei
Cornigeras norunt matres ; agnique petulci

---

Ver. 367. *Nor shade for her, nor dew-distended glebe,*] Virgil has been as attentive to this part of the description of our poet, as Statius. It is thus he represents the grief of a "brother-steer," who had lost his companion by the murrain, so admirably described in his Georgics :

Non umbræ altorum nemorum, non mollia possunt
Prata movere animum, non qui per saxa volutus
Purior electro campum petit amnis. l. iii. 520.

Mean time, nor grassy mead, nor lofty grove,
The mournful mate's afflicted mind can move ;
Nor yet from rocks delicious streams that roll
As amber clear, can soothe his sorrowing soul.
Sotheby.

There is an episode, so perfectly similar, in the Alaámeriyyo of the Arabian poet Lebid, which constituted one of the Moallakát, or Seven Poems, that were transcribed in letters of gold, and suspended in the temple of Mecca, that I cannot avoid inserting it, for a comparison with Lucretius. Those, who copy from Nature, cannot widely differ in their picture, let them copy when and where they may.

Afatilca am wahhshiyyahón masbúâhón
Khadhalat waádiyáho álsiwári kiwámohá, &c.

The entire poem may be found in Sir William Jones's Works, vol. iv. in which we are also favoured with the following elegant version :

" Is this the swiftness of my camel ? No ; rather she resembles a wild cow, whose calf has been devoured by ravenous beasts, when she had suffered him to graze apart, and relied for his protection on the leader of the herd.

" A mother with flat nostrils ; who, *as soon as she misses her young one, ceases not to run hastily round the vales* between the sand-hills, *and to fill them with her mournful cries :*

" With cries for her white-haired young, who now lies rolled in dust, after the dun wolves, hunters of the desert, have divided his mangled limbs, and their feast has not been interrupted.

" *She passes the night in agony*, while the rain falls

Beats with her cloven hoof th' indented dale,
Each spot exploring, if, perchance, she still
May trace her idol; through th' umbrageous grove,
With well-known voice, she moans; and oft re-seeks,
Urg'd by a mother's love, th' accustom'd stall.
Nor shade for her, nor dew-distended glebe,
Nor stream soft gliding down its banks abrupt,
Yields aught of solace; nor the carking care
Averts, that preys within: nor the gay young
Of others soothe her o'er the joyous green:
So deep she longs, so lingers for her own.
Thus equal known, thus long'd for, seek, in turn,
The tender heifer, tremulous of voice,

---

in a continued shower, and drenches the tangled groves with a profuse stream. She shelters herself under the root of a tree, whose boughs are thick, *apart from other trees*, by the edge of a hill, *whose fine sands are shaken by her motion. (trepidation.)*

" At length, when the clouds are dispersed, and the dawn appears, she rises early, and *her hoofs glide on the slippery ground.*

" She grows impatient, and *wild with grief:* she lies, frantic, in the pool of Soayid, for seven whole days, with their twin sisters. *(Seven Nights.)*

" And now she is in total despair: her teats, which were full of milk, are grown flaccid and dry, *though they were not worn by suckling, and weaning her young.*"

Lucretius, among the moderns, has been copied, in this tender and simple episode, by a variety of writers. Of these, the best specimens I am acquainted with, are that of Spenser, in his Fairy Queen, and that of Delille, in his L'Homme des Champs. The authors are common, and the reader may consult them at his leisure. The elegant and express version of it, however, by M. le Blanc de Guillet, is not so much at hand, and I shall therefore transcribe it as a fair specimen of his general success:

Non jamais dans leur coeur nul trait ne s'en efface,
Lorsqu' un jeune taureau, frappé d' un coup mortel,
Sous le conteau sacré tombe au piéd de l'autel,
Sa mère, non plus mère, errante, désolée,
S'égare dans les bois, éperdue, isolée,
La trace de ses pas est marquée en tous lieux.
Partout elle promène un regard soucieux.
Où peut-être cachée l'objet de sa tendresse?
Toute à ce souvenir, elle revient sans cesse
Des pâtis a son toit, de son toit aux pâtis,
Par ces cris douloureux tour à tour attendris.
Plus de goût pour les fleurs, pour sa tendre feuillée,
Des perles du matin vainement émeillée.
Ni les gazons naissans, ni le cristal des eaux,
Ni les jeux, les combat d'autres jeunes taureaux,
Rien n'offre qu'un vain charme a sa douleur secrette.
Rien ne rend à son coeur le fils qu'elle regrette,
Ce fils si bien gravé dans ce coeur gémissant.

Balatum pecudes: ita, quod natura reposcit,
Ad sua quisque, feri decurrunt ubera lactis.
Postremo, quod vis frumentum; non tamen omne,
Quidque suo genere, inter se simile esse videbis,
Quin intercurrat quædam distantia formis:
Concharumque genus parili ratione videmus
Pingere telluris gremium, quâ mollibus undis
Litoris incurvi bibulam pavit æquor arenam.
Quâ re etiam atque etiam simili ratione necesse est,
Naturâ quoniam constant, neque facta manu sunt
Unius ad certam formam primordia rerum,
Dissimili inter se quadam volitare figurâ.
Perfacile est animi ratione exsolvere nobis,
Quâ re fulmineus multo penetralior ignis,
Quam noster, fluat, e tedis terrestribus ortus.
Dicere enim possis cœlestem fulminis ignem,
Subtilem magis, e parvis constare figuris;
Atque ideo transire foramina, quæ nequit ignis
Noster hic, e lignis ortus, tedâque creatus.

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Ver. 380. —*th' enamell'd shells, that paint*
*The bending shore; whose thirsty sands drink deep*, &c.]

We trace Ovid turning his eye to this passage of our poet, in his elegy "to a female friend on a voyage:"

Nec medius tenues conchas pictosve lapillos
Pontus habet: bibuli littoris illa mora est.
Amor, l. ii. eleg. 11.

Seek not the midmost main for *polish'd shells*,
Or *pictur'd jewels*: these the strand presents
Thirsty and arid.

Camoens likewise, than whom few poets have been more profoundly versed in Greek and Roman literature, has copied from the same source. He is describing the Island of Love:

——cuja *brancha area*
*Pintou de ruivas conchas* Cyterea. Lus. Cant. ix.

And the gay-bleating lamb, their horned dams,
Lur'd by the milky fount that nurtures life.
The corn, moreo'er, the yellow harvest yields,
Matures not all alike ;—e'en the same kind
In size oft varying to the curious eye.
Thus vary, too, th' enamell'd shells, that paint
The bending shore ; whose thirsty sands drink deep
The main's soft waves, redundant roll'd along.
Hence doubly flows it why the seeds of things,
Compact by nature, by mechanic art
Shap'd not to one fixt model, each from each
Should differ oft in figure through the void.
Illumin'd thus, the mind with ease decides
Why heaven's electric flash a subtler power
Boasts, than the flame by torches fed below:
That form'd than this of atoms finer far,
Triumphant piercing many a pore minute
By the dull taper's blaze essay'd in vain.

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With *purple shells* transfus'd as marble veins,
The yellow sands celestial Venus stains.
MICKLE.

So Akenside :

And *painted shells* indent their speckled *wreath.*

In like manner, Darwin, when describing the formation of the external scenery of the earth from the ocean, that

——wrap'd her in his azure robe—
And *deck'd her shores* with corals, pearls, and *shells.*

The verses of Creech, on this imagery of Lucretius, are more poetical than we find them in general ; but they are by no means a translation of the original :

And so in shells, where waters washing o'er,
With wanton kisses bathe the amorous shore.

Præterea, lumen per cornum transit; at imber
Respuitur. Quâ re? nisi luminis illa minora
Corpora sunt, quam de quibus est liquor almus aquarum.
Et, quam vis subito, per colum vina videmus
Perfluere; at contra tardum contatur olivom:
Aut, quia nimirum majoribus est elementis,
Aut magis hamatis inter se, perque plicatis;
Atque ideo fit, utei non tam diducta repente
Inter se possint primordia singula quæque
Singula per quoiusque foramina permanare.
Huc adcedit, utei mellis lactisque liquores,
Jocundo sensu linguæ, tractentur in ore;
At contra tetra absinthii natura ferique
Centaurii fedo pertorquent ora sapore;
Ut facile adgnoscas e lævibus atque rotundis
Esse ea, quæ sensus jocunde tangere possunt:
At contra, quæ amara, atque aspera, quomque videntur,
Hæc magis hamatis inter se nexa teneri;
Proptereaque solere vias rescindere nostris
Sensibus, introituque suo perrumpere corpus.
Omnia postremo bona sensibus, et mala tactu,
Dissimili inter se pugnant perfecta figurâ:

---

Ver. 404. *The wormwood straight convulses, by the tongue*
*Abhorr'd, and writhing every sapid nerve.*] In imitation of this passage of our poet, Virgil thus expresses himself:

Light, the clear glass pervades, while lymph recoils:
Whence springs the diff'rence, but that subtler seeds
Rear the bright sun-beam than the fountain form?
Free through the strainer flows the sparkling wine,
While the slow oil hangs heavy: in its course
Check'd, or by atoms of a grosser frame,
Or more perplex'd, and tangled; each from each
Hence severing tardy, and, with toil extreme,
Transuding sep'rate through th' attenuate lawn.

Thus vary tastes: and while the dulcet draught
Of milk, or honey charms th' enchanted lip,
The wormwood strait convulses, by the tongue
Abhorr'd, and writhing every sapid nerve.
Hence may'st thou learn those seeds that rouse, combin'd,
A joyous flavour, round exist, and smooth;
While those that form the bitter, and austere,
Are hook'd, or jagged, and their path propel
Alone by wounding, hostile to the sense.

Thus all things live; from primal atoms rear'd
Of shape diverse, as deep within they ope

---

At sapor indicium faciet manifestus, et ora
Tristia tentantum sensu torquebit amaror.
Georg. lib. ii. 246.

This will the taste demonstrate, and the lip
Distorted turn, and hate the bitter sip.

Ne tu forte putes, serræ stridentis acerbum
Horrorem constare elementis lævibus æque,
Ac Musæa mele, per chordas organicei quæ
Mobilibus digitis expergefacta figurant:
Neu simili penetrare putes primordia formâ
In nareis hominum, quom tetra cadavera torrent,
Et quom scena croco Cilici perfusa recens est,
Araque Panchæos exhalat propter odores:
Neve bonos rerum simili constare colores
Semine constituas, oculos quei pascere possunt,
Et quei conpungunt aciem, lacrumareque cogunt,

---

Ver. 416. *That wake the strain mellifluous, when the fair,*
*With flying fingers, sweeps th' accordant lyre.*]
The Latin of these two verses is possessed of uncommon beauty, and most appropriate rhythm: it is not possible to conceive of terms in any language better adapted to convey the idea of ease, dexterity, and rapid movement, than the *mobilibus digitis* of our poet; and I am very sensible that the phrase, *flying fingers*, in the version, although, perhaps, the most expressive, as well as the most literal our own language will afford, falls far short of the inimitable original. Mr. Wakefield has here quoted two lines from Maximianus, which, as he justly observes, have an elegance nearly equal:

Docta loqui digitis, et carmina fingere docta,
Et responsuram solicitare lyram. El. v. 17.

Skill'd with the flying fingers to discourse,
To feign sweet rhythms, and woo th' accordant lyre.

The verses of Lucretius cannot but remind us of the following, in Pope's Alexander's Feast:

*Wake* into voice each silent string,
And *sweep* the sounding *lyre*.

Or the still more animated and elegant couplet in Gray's inimitable Elegy:

*Hands*, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or *wak'd* to extacy the *living lyre*.

Mr. Cumberland, in his Calvary, has a still nearer approximation to our poet, in the following:

——the minstrels strike
Their golden harps: *swift o'er the sounding strings*
*Their flying fingers sweep.*

Polignac has been equally mindful of his elegant antagonist:

——Ita quilibet arte
Strenuus Aoniâ citharam pulsare sonantem
*Mobilibus digitis, chordasque* animare loquaces
Et lenocinio blandi modulaminis aures
Demulcere tuas, et citharâ sic pendet ab ipsâ,
Non ullos ut possit eâ sine promere cantus.
Anti-Lucr. v. 743.

Some secret source of pleasure or of pain.
So deem not thou the saw's discordant scream,
Horrid, and harsh, flows from the same smooth seeds
That wake the strain mellifluous, when the fair,
With flying fingers, sweeps th' accordant lyre.
Nor deem those atoms like, from putrid scenes
That spring malignant, and th' essential sweets
Breath'd from CILICIAN saffron, or the blaze
Of fragrant altars fed from orient groves.
Nor canst thou form from the same source those hues,
On which the vision feeds with fond delight,
And those abhorr'd, and hideous, or the germs
Pungent and keen, that rouse the sight to tears.

---

The minstrel, thus, inflam'd with sacred fire,
Whose *flying fingers* strike the sounding lyre,
Wake the shrill strings, and, o'er thy ravish'd ear,
Breathe the sweet balm of movements soft and clear—
So on the lyre depends, that nought of strain
Void of its influence, can his hands attain.

Nor ought I to forget the elegant imitation of this passage of our poet, in the Oberon of Wieland, Canto xi.

How does her rosy *finger's subtle flight*
In sweet confusion *sweep* each soul-felt *string!*
SOTHEBY.

Ver. 419. —*th' essential sweets*
*Breath'd from* CILICIAN *saffron,*——] Cilicia, a country of Asia Minor, was celebrated by almost all the Roman poets for its unrivalled saffron. Propertius has adverted to it in more than one place on this account; and Virgil has thus announced the same fact in his Culex:

——Heic et acanthus
Et rosa purpureo crescit pudibunda colore:
Et violæ genus omne heic est, et Spartica myrtus.
Atque hyacinthus; et heic *Cilici crocus* editus antro.
Ver. 400.

Here springs the violet, th' acanthus blows,
Here Sparta's myrtle, and the blushing rose;
Blue hyacinths, and saffron boasting blooms
Bright as the *saffron in Cilicia's glooms.*

Among the luxuries in which the Romans indulged in their more voluptuous periods, one was, the fashion of strewing this Cilician saffron, in conjunction with several other odoriferous flowers, over the stages of their public theatres, prior to the commencement of the drama. It is to this custom Lucretius appears to allude, in the present passage; and Horace has an allusion of the same kind, in his Epistle to Augustus:

Recte necne, crocum floresque perambulet Attæ
Fabula, si dubitem; clament periisse pudorem, &c.
Ver. 79.

Aut fedâ specie tetrei, turpesque, videntur.
Omnis enim, sensus quæ mulcet quomque videntum,
Haud sine principiali aliquo lævore creata est:
At contra, quæquomque molesta atque aspera constat,
Non aliquo sine materiæ squalore reperta est.
Sunt etiam, quæ jam nec lævia jure putantur
Esse, neque omnino flexis mucronibus unca;
Sed magis angellis paullum prostantibus, ac quæ
Titillare magis sensus, quam lædere, possint:
Fæcula iam quo de genere est, inulæque sapores.

Denique, jam calidos igneis, gelidamque pruinam,
Dissimili dentata modo, conpungere sensus

---

Worthy, or worthless, Atta's sure to find
O'er flowers and saffron-blooms his drama stalk;
And, should I doubt, each bawls aloud, "for shame!"

The same custom was evinced long afterwards, as we learn from Seneca, in honour of Trajan: "balsamum," says he, "et crocum per gradus theatri fluere jussit." Epist. 21.

Ver. 428. *While pain but springs from atoms hook'd and harsh.*] The same system has, with little alteration, been continued, among many philosophers, to modern times. In allusion to which, Thomson, adverting to the pain produced by intense frost, attributes the phænomenon to

Myriads of little salts, or hook'd or shap'd
Like double wedges, and diffus'd immense
Through water, earth, and ether.

Ver. 431. —*These the nerves*
*Pain not, but titillate;*——] *Titillare*, ψαφηλιζειν. Cicero has observed, that this was the term employed by Epicurus to denote the agreeable excitation produced by the lighter pleasures of the senses. At has leviores ducis voluptates, quibus quasi *titillatio* (Epicuri enim hoc verbum est) adhibetur sensibus." De Nat. Deor. I. 40.

Ver. 434. ——*sauces, cater'd to the taste*
*From the pale inula, or grape's soft grounds.*—] Among the sauces introduced at the Roman tables, one was manufactured from the lees of some of their favourite wines, and another from the root of the Inula or Elecampane, the Aster of Tournefort and Linnéus. The wines principally employed, were those of Falernum and Cos, an island in the Ægean sea, widely celebrated as the native soil of Hippocrates. Horace, in several of the Epistles in his second book of Satires, makes mention of both these

'Twere vain t' attempt: for all the soul that wakes
To various pleasure, boasts a base rotund;
While pain but springs from atoms hook'd and harsh.

Yet seeds there are between; not smooth complete,
Nor deeply jagged, but with angles shap'd
Just peeping o'er the surface. These the nerves
Pain not, but titillate; a sense perceiv'd
When sweets with bitters, sours with sweets combine,
As oft in sauces, cater'd to the taste
From the pale inula, or grape's soft grounds.
But fires and frosts spring different; from a base
Unlike indented, though indented each.

sauces, which were supposed to have the double property of stimulating the appetite, and, at the same time, assisting the digestion: thus,

——qualia lassum
Pervellunt stomachum, siser, cale, *fæcula Coa.*
II. 8.

The taste of the sauce alluded to in this passage, and obtained from the lees of the Coan, or Falernian wine, was acid; while that produced from the inula was a pleasant and modified bitter, or austere. For though Horace, in another passage, Sat. ii. 2. applies the epithet acid to this latter (acidas mavult inulas)—he only means to express its general acrimony or pungency. And in his eighth epistle of the same book, he has allotted to it its proper appellation of bitter (inulas amaras). The excess of its austere, or bitter taste, was corrected by sweets of different kinds, which, like the former, rendered it not only a sauce grateful to the taste, but wholesome to the stomach. Thus Pliny: Amarior inula per se stomacho inimicissima, eadem dulcibus mistis saluberrima. Pluribus modis austeritate victâ gratiam invenit. L. xix. c. 5.

Ver. 436. *Yet fires and frosts spring different; from a base*
*Unlike indented, though indented each.*] Heat and cold were equally, among ancient philosophers, supposed to be substances *suorum generum:* the corporiety of cold, however, became doubted about a century ago, and was, at length, universally denied; Boerhaave, I believe, being the last who contended for its substantial nature, in opposition to the doctrine, that it was nothing more than a mere negative quality. Yet, since it frequently occurs in the great cycle of the sciences, as in the operations of nature, that that which dies in one season revives in another, so the new tenet, that cold is a mere negative quality, has some prospect of perishing, and the antiquated

Corporis, indicio nobis est tactus uterque.
Tactus enim, tactus, pro divôm numina sancta!
Corporis est sensus, vel quom res extera sese
Insinuat, vel quom lædit, quæ in corpore nata est,
Aut juvat egrediens genitaleis, per Veneris res:

---

opinion, that it is a substance *sui generis*, resurging from its ruins. Professor Pictet invented, some years ago, an instrument, by which he endeavoured to prove, that cold bodies transmitted frigorific rays, which might be concentrated in a convex mirror, and sensibly affect a delicate air thermometer: and Count Rumford, building upon this idea, has engaged in a course of additional experiments, and written a very ingenious paper, in which he has given their result, and his own consequent opinion; which appears to be, that frigorific rays, or emanations, issue from all cold bodies in the same manner as calorific emanations from hot; and that the cold experienced on the summit of high mountains, as well as the regulated temperature of the earth, is produced by the intermixture of such frigorific rays transmitted from the heavens with the calorific rays of solar heat. But as whatever emanates or radiates must be a substance, the frigorific rays of cold bodies, and the calorific of hot, must be necessarily and equally substantial, and consequently, cold itself, as well as heat; which is the doctrine maintained in the text. See Philosoph. Trans. for 1804. Part I. Art. vii. Elementary heat, or fire, is still indeed ranked among philosophers as an independent and essential substance; though it seems doubtful how long, even heat itself may be allowed to preserve its primitive rank and dignity. Light and fire, it is generally maintained, are one and the same thing, produced by one and the same cause. But those who, with such a belief, entertain, at the same time, the theory of Euler with respect to light, must altogether discard the materiality of fire, and conceive of it, as Euler did of the former, to be nothing more than a vibratory motion of the particles of the combustible body, or of the elastic medium of the air, by which the sensation of heat is communicated to the touch in the same manner as the sensation of sound is excited in the ear. See note on ver. 166 of this book. And this, from some of his earlier papers, appears to have been the theory of Count Rumford himself, notwithstanding the discrepancy of such an opinion with that I have just noticed. Yet, perhaps, this discrepancy exists rather in the wording of his hypothesis, than in any necessary hostility of one part of it to another.

The comprehensive and elaborate theory of Epicurus, however, not only allowed an actual and material existence to elementary heat and cold, but attributed to the primary corpuscles of each, a certain and definite mechanical figure, by means of which their different operations were effected. Consistently, therefore, with the general position advanced by our poet, ver. 405, and following, that every thing pleasant and grateful to the senses is formed from atoms perfectly smooth and round, while, whatever is hateful and disgusting is educed from pointed or jagged atoms,—Epicurus determined, that the atoms of both elemental heat and cold, were pointed, or, as Lucretius terms them, indented: but, as exciting different effects, that they were pointed or indented differently: those of heat being in some degree round or orbicular, with little points abutting from the surface of the corpuscle, while those of cold, on the contrary, were angular and pyramidal, or polygons of three sides. In his epistle to Pythocles, he gives this reason for the conversion of water into ice, that "the orbicular atoms (meaning those of heat) are, at this time, extruded from the water, and those of a trigonic and acutangular

This if thou doubt, the TOUCH shall quick decide.
For TOUCH, O TOUCH! ye powers of heav'n supreme!
TOUCH forms the genuine sense whence chief we trace
Whate'er without insinuates, or within
Springs up innate, injurious in th' escape,
Or, like the genial tide by Venus rous'd,

---

figure (those, doubtless, of elementary cold) are more closely compressed together, whether resident in the water itself, at the time, or absorbed from without, and thus united to the water." κατ' εκθλιψιν μεν του περι φορους σχηματισμου εκ του υδατος, συνεστιν δε των σκαλυνων, τε εξυγονιων των εν τω ὑδατι ὑπαρχοντων, ἡ κατα δε την εξωθεν των τοιουτων προσκρισιν.

Des Cartes has made a large use of this doctrine of Epicurus, in his theory of the creation of the world. For though he contends, contrary to the Epicureans, and indeed, the more modern Newtonian creed, for the infinite divisibility of matter; yet he finds himself under the necessity of supposing that its first elements were thrown by mutual occursion and concussion into atoms of three grand orders or divisions: globules, or spheres of a larger dimension, globules of a smaller dimension, and particles of a jagged, or angular shape: and he appropriates a similar use to each of these orders of elementary atoms with our poet in the subject immediately before us. From a junction of the minuter globules, proceed the lightest and most liquid bodies in nature; from an union of the larger, those less liquid and volatile; and from the hooked and angular particles, those that are most gross and difficult of motion. See this part of the Cartesian theory more fully explained in the note on b. v. v. 528.

Ver. 437. *Unlike indented,*——] Dissimili *dentata* modo. *Indented,* or armed with teeth. This term, which was occasionally applied by Latin poets to any thing that could puncture or lacerate, or irritate by its acrimony, has, nevertheless, been more frequently used to describe the effect of severe cold, or frost. Thus Horace:

Matutina parum cautos jam *frigora mordent:*
SAT. ii. 6.

Now *bite the morning frosts* the unprepared.

In the same manner, in our own language, we use the phrases *frost-bitten,* a cold *biting* wind, &c. Thus, Shakspeare:

——Here feel we the *icy phang,*
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind;
Which, when it *bites,* and blows upon my body,
E'en till I shrink with cold, I smile.

Ver. 438. *For* TOUCH, *O* TOUCH, *ye powers of heav'n supreme!*

TOUCH *forms the genuine sense,* &c.] The term touch, like simple perception, appears applicable to all the senses; but even in its appropriate and more restrained meaning, our poet may be justified in his eulogy, in consequence of its being a sense extending universally over the body, and not confined, as are the senses in general, to one individual organ. See note on ver. 341, b. i.

Faber has, unwarrantably, objected to this apostrophe, which, observes he, may be a poetic, but, certainly, is not a philosophic illustration, and, least of all, an illustration after the manner of Epicurus. Upon this subject, however, and in express contradiction to Faber's opinion, Eusebius has justly observed, that "Epicurus was accustomed to indulge in similar apostrophes, or exclamations to the supreme powers, in all his books; binding himself by the most solemn oaths; and invoking the gods in almost all his discourses." ορκους δε και ὁρκισμους μυριους τοις ἑαυτου βιβλιοις εγγραφει, ομνυς τε συνεχως και Μα Δια, και Νη Δια, εξορκων τους εντυγχανοντας, &c. Præp. Evang. xiv. 27.

Aut, ex obfensu quom turbant corpore in ipso
Semina, confundunt inter se concita sensum:
Ut, si forte manu quam vis jam corporis ipse
Tute tibi partem ferias, atque experiare.
Quapropter longe formas distare necesse est
Principiis, varios quæ possint edere sensus.

Denique, quæ nobis durata ac spissa videntur,
Hæc magis hamatis inter sese esse necesse est,
Et quasi ramosis alte conpacta teneri.
In quo jam genere in primis adamantina saxa
Primâ acie constant, ictus contemnere sueta;
Et validei silices, ac duri robora ferri,
Æraque, quæ claustris restantia vociferantur.
Illa quidem debent ex lævibus atque rotundis
Esse magis, fluido quæ corpore liquida constant;
Namque papaveris haustus item est facilis quod aquarum:
Nec retinentur enim inter se glomeramina quæque,

---

Ver. 455. —*the diamond's blaze,*
*Fearless of insult*——,] This superior rigidity of the diamond renders it, according to Pliny, proof against almost every species of blow: insomuch that, if beaten on an anvil, the iron itself, both of the anvil and the hammer, will yield before the diamond: Incudibus deprehenditur ita respuens ictum, et ferrum utrimque dissiliat. L. xxxvii. c. 2.

Ver. 457. ——*the brass*
*Discordant creaking from the public gates.*] In the same manner, Virgil describes the entrance into the temple of Juno at Carthage:

Ærea cui gradibus surgebant limina, nexæque
Ære trabes; *foribus cardo stridebat ahenis.*
Æn. l. i. v. 452.

Brass were its rising steps, its joints were brass;
From brazen doors the jarring hinges creak'd.

And Milton, with more sublimity than either of the Roman poets, the sounding of the gates of hell when first unbarred by Sin:

Pregnant with pleasure; or, perchance, the frame
Affecting inly, as th' essential seeds
Collect tumultuous, urg'd to civil strife.
A feeling, this, full oft educ'd amain
Whene'er th' uplifted palm, from sport or ire,
Lets fall its vengeance o'er the redd'ning cheek.
Hence, from effects so various, various too
Must be the forms to primal seeds assign'd.
There are, moreo'er, that hard exist, and dense:
From atoms, these, more crook'd and clinging spring,
Like tangled branches intertwin'd throughout.
Such, mid the foremost, shines the diamond's blaze,
Fearless of insult, such the valid flint,
The steel's enduring vigour, and the brass
Discordant creaking from the public gates.
While those, revers'd, a fluent power that boast
Swell into birth from seeds rotund, and smooth,
Unlink'd th' essential globules, and with ease

---

——open fly
With impetuous recoil, and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors, and *on their hinges grate*
*Harsh thunder*, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. Par. Lost, b. ii. v. 879.

Klopstock has occasion to vary the painting: for with him the infernal door or gate leads to the mansions of the blest, his paradise being situated in the centre of the earth. Hence, in the Messias, the description runs thus:

—schon stand der unsterblichen fuss an der heiligen pforte,
Die vor ihm, wie rauschender Cherubim flügel, sich aufthat,
Hinter ihm wieder mit eile sich schloss.

Now stood th' immortal at the heavenly gate:
That *with the sound of Cherub's rustling wings*,
Op'd at his presence, and as quickly clos'd.

Et procursus item proclive volubilis exstat.
Omnia postremo, quæ puncto tempore cernis
Diffugere, ut fumum, nebulas, flammasque, necesse est,
Si minus omnia sunt e lævibus atque rotundis,
At non esse tamen perplexis indupedita;
Pungere utei possint corpus, penetrareque saxa,
Nec tamen hærere inter se; quod quisque videmus
Sentibus esse datum: facile ut cognoscere possis,
Non e perplexis, sed acutis, esse elementis.
Sed, quod amara vides eadem, quæ fluvida constant,
Sudor utei maris est, minume mirabile quoiquam.
Nam, quod fluvidum est, e lævibus atque rotundis
Est; et lævibus atque rotundis mixta doloris
Corpora: nec tamen hæc retineri hamata necessum:
Scilicet; esse globosa tamen, quom squalida constent,
Provolvi simul, ut possint conlædere sensus.
Et, quod mixta putes magis aspera lævibus esse

---

Ver. 407. ——*nor to view*
*Cohering equal, like th' embracing briar:*
*Not jagg'd, but pointed, hence, the base they own.*]
The commentator upon Creech's translation has justly observed, that these verses form a material part of the argument of Lucretius, and expresses his surprize that Creech has omitted them in his version; more especially, as he has retained the original verses corresponding to them in his Latin edition. The fact is, that the interpreters have been divided upon their authenticity and purity. Lambinus has marked them off as needless and inelegant. Faber has discarded them altogether, as the impertinent insertion of some scribe. Nardius, Fayus, Havercamp, and Wakefield, have all, however, retained them in the text: and upon their authority, as well as for the additional illustration which they afford, I have suffered them to remain, and allotted them a place in the translation. Marchetti, probably from the indecision of the critics, has retained the more vulgar reading of *sensibus* for *sentibus*; and of course omitted the reference to the briar, contained in the second line of the above quotation:

Non gli abbiano intrigati acciò sian' atti
A punger gli occhj e a penetrar ne' sassi

Pour'd headlong down, dissevering as they fall.
Those, too, that quick fly off, as clouds or smoke,
Or lambent flame, if not from seeds educ'd
Rotund, and polish'd, doubtless, in their make
Nought know perplext, or hook'd, since arm'd with power
To pierce the Parian marble, nor to view
Cohering equal, like th' embracing briar:
Not jagg'd, but pointed, hence, the base they own.

Nor wond'rous this; that things of fluent frame
As the broad ocean, oft should strike the sense
With taste unlovely; for, though round, and smooth
The genial atoms whence all fluids flow,
Still, seeds discordant oft will intermix,
Rough, though globose, and by the tongue abhorr'd,
Though fitted still the fluent mass to form.
This to confirm, to prove with polish'd seeds
Seeds harsh full oft combine, whence springs alone

---

Senza che sieno avvitichiati insieme,
*Il chè vede ciascuno esser concesso*
*Di conoscere a' sensi* onde tu possa
Facilmente imparar ch' ell non sono
Fatte d' adunchi ma d' acuti semi.

I will here just remark, that this version of Marchetti is altogether synonimous with a conjectural emendation hazarded by Mr. Wakefield on the present passage, and which he has inserted in his notes, though he has not ventured to introduce it into the text. The reading in the latter is as follows:

Nec tamen hærere inter se; quod quisque videmus
*Sentibus eses datum.*

His conjectural emendation runs thus:

Nec tamen inter se, *quodquomque* videmus
*Sensibus est clarum.*

For the learned editor's reasons for this variation, I must refer the reader to the edition itself. In the mean time, it must be universally acknowledged, that the terms printed in Italics, in the Italian and Latin, form a striking similarity and agreement.

Principiis, unde est Neptuni corpus acerbum;
Est ratio secernundi, seorsumque videndi.
Humor dulcis, ubei per terras crebrius idem
Percolatur, ut in foveam fluat, ac mansuescat.
Liquit enim supra tetri primordia viri;
Aspera, quo magis in terris hærescere possint.
Quod quoniam docui, pergam connectere rem, quæ,
Ex hoc apta, fidem ducat: primordia rerum
Finitâ variare figurarum ratione.
Quod, si non ita sit, rursum jam semina quædam
Esse infinito debebunt corporis auctu.
Nam, quod eâdem unâ quoius vis in brevitate
Corporis inter se multum variare figuræ
Non possunt: face enim minumis e partibus esse
Corpora prima; tribus, vel paullo pluribus, auge:
Nempe, ubi eas parteis unius corporis omneis,
Summa atque ima, locans, transmutans dextera lævis,
Omnimodis expertus eris, quam quisque det ordo

---

Ver. 481. *Thus Nature acts: through many a thirsty sand*
*The surge she filters, fresh'ning in its course,* &c.] There is an obvious imitation of the entire passage in Thomson's Autumn, and one of the sages he refers to, is unquestionably our poet:

Some sages say, that where the numerous wave
For ever lashes the resounding shore,
Drill'd thro' the *sandy stratum*, every way,
The waters with the *sandy stratum* rise;
Amid whose *angles* infinitely *strain'd*,
They joyful leave their *jaggy* salts behind,
And *clear* and *sweeten* as they soak along.
Ver. 741.

Ver. 486. *This prov'd, what follows, as a truth deriv'd,*] We have here another axiom, or position developed, of the Epicurean philosophy, that, though the primal atoms of matter vary much in their configuration, consistently with what has been already stated, they cannot possibly, from the minuteness of their size, vary to infinitude. And the

The main's disflavour—from the briny wave
The nauseous mass subtract, and all is sweet.
Thus Nature acts: through many a thirsty sand
The surge she filters, fresh'ning in its course,
Till freed, at length, from every acrid pow'r,
Tangled, and fixt behind, the dulcet lymph
Resprings to view, a calm and lucid pool.

This prov'd, what follows, as a truth deriv'd,
But that the forms of seeds, though varying much,
Ne'er vary endless; not unfrequent, else,
Full many a seed must boast a bulk immense:
For many a differing figure ne'er can lurk
In things minute. Deem, then, primordial seeds
Three fancied parts comprise, or grant e'en more,
Invert their order, let the right be left,
Depress the loftiest, the profound exalt,—

---

progressive proofs of this axiom are, if I mistake not, so clearly advanced by our poet, as to render all comment unnecessary. It is the doctrine of Epicurus himself, as we learn from Plutarch de Placit. Philosoph. l. i. c. 3. as also from his own epistle to Herodotus, ατομοι ταις διαφοραις ουκ απλως απειροι εισιν, αλλα μονον απειριληπτοι. "The simple forms of different atoms are not infinite, but merely indefinite."

Blackmore discovered, therefore, a scanty knowledge of the system of this philosopher, when, in his apostrophe to Lucretius, in the fourth book of his "Creation," he wrote thus:

Since to your uncompounded atoms you
*Figures in number infinite allow*,
From which, by various combination, springs
This unconfin'd diversity of things,
Are not, in this, design and counsel clear?

Sir Isaac Newton, as well as Lucretius, would have advised him, had they been present, to search for other arguments of wisdom and design, than this infinitude of figures in the primal atoms of matter, and have added, that he could otherwise have no reason to hope for success.

Formarum speciem totius corporis ejus ;
Quod super est, si forte voles variare figuras,
Addendum parteis alias erit : inde sequetur,
Adsimili ratione, alias ut postulet ordo,
Si tu forte voles etiam variare figuras.
Ergo formarum novitatem corporis augmen
Subsequitur : quâ re non est ut credere possis,
Esse infinitis distantia semina formis ;
Ne quædam cogas inmani maxumitate
Esse : supra quod jam docui non esse probare.
Jam tibi Barbaricæ vestes, Melibœaque fulgens
Purpura, Thessalico concharum tincta colore ;
Aurea, pavonum ridenti inbuta lepore,
Pepla, novo rerum superata colore, jacerent :
Contemptus sudos smyrnæ, mellisque sapores ;
Et cycnea mele, Phœbeaque, dædala chordis,
Carmina, consimili ratione obpressa silerent :

---

Ver. 503. *Already else the purple woof superb*
*Of* Melibœa, *robbing for its dye*
*The* Syrian *coasts,*——] The Melibœa, here alluded to, was a city of Thessaly, at the foot of mount Ossa, and the birth-place of Philoctetes. It was universally celebrated, as Vossius has observed, for the manufacture of its purple dye ; a tincture obtained from them urex, or oyster fisheries, established for this purpose in many parts around the coasts of Thessaly and Syria. In this manner Virgil alludes to it, in his description of the games instituted in commemoration of Anchises :

Victori chlamydem auratam, quam plurima circum
Purpura Mæandro duplici *Melibœa* cucurrit ;
Lib. v. v. 250.

The victor's prize a golden robe, imbued
With *Melibœan* purple, from the shores
Of intricate Mæander.

Ver. 506. *The peacock's laughing plumage*—] The figure is bold, but not uncommon. I have already noticed it in a note on B. i. 8. With Lucretius, it appears to have been a favourite trope ; and the reader

Soon will the pigmy mass exhaust complete
Its tiny change of figures: would'st thou, then,
Augment the variance, thou must add, perforce,
New primal matter, hence augmented sole.
Thus from fresh forms increase of size must flow
Perpetual; nor the seeds of things in shape
Can differ endless, or e'en once evince
A bulk immense, as erst the Muse has prov'd.

Already else the purple woof superb
Of Melibœa, robbing for its dye
The Syrian coasts,—already, dropt with gold,
The peacock's laughing plumage else had sunk
By gawdier hues o'erpower'd. The balmy myrrh,
The luscious honey never more had urg'd
A boast unrivall'd; e'en the swan's soft dirge
Had ceas'd, and Phœbus dropt his liquid lyre:

will again find it employed in v. 564 of the present book. With Mr. Gray, it seems to have been equally in favour. In a note on the above, v. 564, I have introduced one passage in proof of this assertion: in the following couplet, from the same exquisite poet, we meet with another:

The *laughing* flowers that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.

Gessner employs this figure with an equal frequency. I must restrain myself to a single instance, which I shall select from his "Death of Abel:" "Ein buntes gemische von blumen—*lachte* der sonne entgegen." "The diversified clusters of flowers *laughed* beneath the rays of the sun."

Ver. 509. ——*e'en the swan's soft dirge*
*Had ceas'd*,——] The poets of Greece and Rome have universally adopted the popular error, that the swan never dies, without uttering the most melodious death-song: an opinion, however, as we learn from Pliny, lib. x. c. 20. that neither the natural historians, nor philosophers of the same countries, ever countenanced. See, on this subject, the note on b. iii. 8.

Namque aliis aliud præstantius exoreretur.
Cedere item retro possent in deteriores
Omnia sic parteis, ut diximus in meliores:
Namque aliis aliud retro quoque tetrius esset
Naribus, auribus, atque oculis, orisque sapori.
Quæ quoniam non sunt, quin rebus reddita certa
Finis utrimque tenet summam; fateare necesse est,
Materiam quoque finitis differre figuris.
Denique, ab ignibus ad gelidas hiemisque pruinas
Finitum est, retroque pari ratione remensum est.
Omnis enim, calor ac frigus: medieique tepores
Inter utrasque jacent, explentes ordine summam.
Ergo finitâ distant ratione creata:
Ancipiti quoniam mucroni utrimque notantur;
Hinc flammis, illinc rigidis insessa pruinis.
Quod quoniam docui, pergam connectere rem, quæ,
Ex hoc apta, fidem ducat: primordia rerum,
Inter se simili quæ sunt perfecta figurâ,
Infinita cluere: et enim, distantia quom sit
Formarum finita, necesse est, quæ similes sint,
Esse infinitas; aut summam materiaï

---

Ver. 526. *But mark this truth, a truth connected close,*] Another axiom of the philosophy of Epicurus, is here advanced in its course: which is, that although the forms of primal atoms be not infinite, yet the atoms of every existing form are so. Our poet has, before, uniformly asserted, that the atoms at large are innumerable: either, then, those of every existing figure must be equally innumerable, or those of some figures must be more numerous than those of others. But as it is natural to suppose that

All things o'er all prevailing undefin'd.
Thus those by sense abhorr'd, as these belov'd,
To more abhorr'd would yield; each still o'er each,
In sight, or sound, in taste or smell diverse
More hateful rear'd, more hideous, and obscene.
But since such powers exist not, since a bound
Is stampt on all things, we must own, convinc'd,
That primal seeds in shape are bounded too.
From frost to fire, from fire to winter's frost,
All, all has limits: heat and cold intense
Th' extremes creating; while progressive warmth
Fills up, between, the modulated scale.
Thus each degree, though varying, varies not
For ever, by extremes adverse confin'd,
Combustion here, and there the polar ice.
But mark this truth, a truth connected close,
That all primordial seeds, of shape alike,
Alike are endless; for though few the forms
Those seeds admit, yet finite were themselves
Th' ENTIRE of things, a doctrine erst disprov'd,

those of every figure are of equal utility and importance in the world, it is in the same manner natural to suppose that they are all equally innumerable, or infinite. Were it not so, indeed, the harmony of creation would be destroyed, and the different orders of beings not arise with a similar precision: for there would then be either a surplus of those which were infinite, or a defalcation in those which were not. Epicurus himself has noticed this axiom of our poet in his epistle to Herodotus: καθ' ἑκαστην δε σχηματισιν, απλως απειροι εστιν ατομοι, ου γαρ, &c.

Finitam constare: id, quod non esse probavi.
Quod quoniam docui, nunc suaviloquis ego paucis
Versibus obtendam, corpuscula materiaï
Ex infinito summam rerum usque tenere,
Undique protelo plagarum continuato.
Nam, quod rara vides magis esse animalia quædam,
Fecundamque magis naturam cernis in illis;
At regione, locoque alio, terrisque remotis,
Multa licet genere esse in eo; numerumque repleri:
Sic, uti quadrupedum cum primis esse videmus
In genere anguimanos elephantos; India quorum
Milibus e multis vallo munitur eburno,
Ut penitus nequeat penetrari: tanta ferarum
Vis est; quarum nos perpauca exempla videmus.

Ver. 532. *Come, then, while thus, in short, but sweetest verse,*] Gassendi, in his commentary on this part of our poet, contends, that this, and the three following verses, should be omitted, as irrelevant to the subject. The connexion, however, I think, is obvious, and the verses themselves are possest of no small beauty. Independently of which, if every similar fancy of every expositor and commentator, were to be equally submitted to, not the text of Lucretius alone, but that of every other classical poet, would be so mangled, curtailed, and varied, that, in the end, we should not have a single line left of acknowledged originality. Lucretius has suffered too much from such fanciful alterations already.

Ver. 542. *——myriads guard,*
*As with an iv'ry mound, all* India's *sons*:] The frequent use of the elephant in ancient, as well as modern wars in this country, is too generally known to need any particular detail. The term *vallum*, however, (*mound* or *wall,*) employed by our poet in the original, receives a large accession of force and beauty from the observations of both Polybius and Pliny, that in India the houses of the wealthy were frequently inlaid with ivory, and the stalls of their beasts inclosed with elephants' trunks. Polyb. l. v. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. viii. c. 10. See also note on v. 23. of the present book, where the same subject is still farther discussed.

Dalrymple informs us, that one of the titles of the king of Ava and Pegu, at the present moment, is "Lord of White, Red, and Spotted Elephants:" of which colours, however, it appears that the white has by far the pre-eminence, in consequence of a

Were finite too, by bounds surmountless chain'd.
Come, then, while thus, in short but sweetest verse,
We prove them infinite; prove hence alone
The world's vast fabric lives, cemented strong
By blows re-active unremitted urg'd.
Few are the forms the casual sight surveys
Of brutes exotic; and, with us, but small
Their unprolific power: yet foreign climes,
And realms far distant, view each class complete,
Boundless in number. Thus, though seldom here
Heaves the huge elephant his pond'rous limbs,
Prince of the savage tribes; yet myriads guard,
As with an iv'ry mound, all India's sons;
A mound no power can pierce. Such the vast stores
That Nature boasts in orders deem'd most rare.

---

tradition, that the Divinity formerly exhibited himself on an elephant of this hue. The whole catalogue of the titles of this monarch is curious, and for a comparison with that of our European potentates, I shall present it to the reader. It was thus the monarch styled himself, in a dispatch to the English East India Company in 1757. "The king despotic, of great merit, of great power, Lord of the countries, Thonahpronda, Tomp Devah, and Camboja; Sovereign of the kingdom of Bûraghmah, the kingdom of Siam and Hughen, and the kingdom of Cassay; Lord of the Mines of Rubies, Gold, Silver, Copper, Iron, and Amber; Lord of white, red, and spotted elephants; Lord of the Vital Golden Lance; Lord of many Golden Palaces, and of all these kingdoms, Grandeurs, and Wealth, whose Royal Person is descended from the nation of the Sun."

Oriental Repository, Vol. I.

Thomson, in his picturesque description of Asia, has not forgotten to introduce this gigantic animal:

——where the Ganges rolls his sacred wave,
Or mid the central depths of blackening woods,
High rais'd in solemn theatre around,
Leans the huge elephant.—Regardless he
Of what the never-resting race of men
Project: thrice happy! could he scape their guile,
Who mine, from cruel avarice, his steps;
Or with his towery grandeur swell their state,
The pride of kings! or else his strength pervert,
And bid him rage amid the mortal fray.

Summer, v. 718.

Sed tamen, id quoque utei concedam, quam lubet esto
Unica res quædam nativo corpore sola,
Quoi similis toto terrarum non sit in orbi;
Infinita tamen nisi erit vis materiaï,
Unde ea progigni possit concepta, creari
Non poterit: neque, quod super est, procrescere, alique.
Quippe et enim sumant oculei, finita per omne
Corpora jactari unius genitalia rei;
Unde, ubi, quâ vi, et quo pacto, congressa coibunt,
Materiæ tanto in pelago, turbâque alienâ?
Non, ut opinor, habent rationem conciliandi:
Sed, quasi, naufragiis magnis multisque coortis,
Disjectare solet magnum mare transtra, cavernas,

---

Ver. 546. *Yet could creation's utmost scope produce*
*A form unparallel'd by all that breathes,*
*Alone and individual,*—] It was the opinion of the Epicurean school, that the earth itself was an immense system, unorganized indeed, but sustained, in some measure, like animals themselves, by the regular digestion or conversion of elementary atoms continually floating through the infinite void, and subject, like animals, to progressive decay. As, then, no animal is found to exist solitarily and individually in its own class, so, also, continuing the analogy, they deduced an additional argument for a plurality of worlds. The whole of this doctrine is more fully illustrated in the note on ver. 1132 of the present book, to which I refer the reader.

Ver. 557. ——*As when the main,*
*Work'd into fury, many a mighty ship*
*Wrecks ruthless, and strow'rds every coast impels*] Silius appears, obviously, to have imitated this description of a tempest, in the following lines:

Sic Lagea ratis, vasto velut insula ponto
Conspecta, illisit scopulis ubi nubifer Eurus
Naufragium spargens, operit mare: jamque per undas
Et transtra, et mali, laceroque aplustria velo,
Et miseri fluitant, removentes æquora, nautæ.
Pun. x. 322.

So strikes the Lagean bark, the shore at hand,
Against some rock that skulks beneath the strand,
When arm'd with storms, and scattering shipwrecks wide,
Fierce Eurus blocks the repercussive tide:
Masts, planks, and seamen, sails, and streamers torn,
O'er the wild waves in one rude wreck are borne.

Yet could creation's utmost scope produce
A form unparallel'd by all that breathes,
Alone and individual,—were the base
Not infinite whence first the monster sprang,
How sprang he then at all? nor birth were his,
Nor e'en, though born, the power to nurture life.
But grant the primal atoms whence alone
Such individual springs, were finite found,
How, when, and where, by what concerted plan,
What pow'r innate, could e'er those atoms meet,
Through ocean, scatter'd of ungenial seeds?
These time could never join. As when the main,
Work'd into fury, many a mighty ship
Wrecks ruthless, and tow'rds every coast impels

---

There is a bold picture of the same phænomenon in Dyer's Fleece, which I will transcribe for a comparison. He is speaking of Lord Anson's trending round the coasts of Patagonia:

——fast-gathering tempests rous'd
Huge Ocean, and involv'd him: all around
Whirlwind, and snow and hail, and horror: now
Rapidly, with the world of waters, down
Descending to the channels of the deep,
He view'd th' uncover'd bottom of th' abyss,
And now the stars, upon the loftiest point
Toss'd of the sky-mixt surges. Oft the burst
Of loudest thunder, with the dash of seas,
Tore the wild-flying sails, and tumbling masts,
While flames, thick-flashing in the gloom, reveal'd
Ruins of decks and shrouds, and sights of death.
B. iv.

I much suspect, however, that this description of Dyer, more especially the latter part of it, is drawn from Voltaire, who thus expresses himself in his Henriad:

L'astre brillant du jour à l'instant s'obscurcit;
L'air siffle, *le ciel gronde, et l'onde au loin mugit:*
Les vents sont dechaînés sur les vagues emues;
*La foudre etincelante eclate dans les nues;*
*Et le feu des eclairs, et l'abyme des flots,*
*Montraient par-tout la mort aux pâles matelots.*
L. iv.

The reader may accept of the following version:

At once dread darkness veils the bright day-star;
Air sighs, heaven howls, and *ocean groans afar:*
Loose fly the wild winds o'er the tortur'd waves,
Through the rent clouds *the pealing thunder raves;*
*And fires above, and boundless gulphs below,*
To the pale crew, *new deaths, new dangers show.*

Antemnas, proram, malos, tonsasque, natanteis;
Per terrarum omneis oras fluitantia aplustra
Ut videantur, et indicium mortalibus edant,
Infidi maris insidias, vireisque, dolumque,
Ut vitare velint, neve ullo tempore credant,
Subdola quom ridet placidi pellacia ponti:
Sic tibi, si finita semel primordia quædam
Constitues, ævom debebunt sparsa per omnem
Disjectare æstus divorsei materiaï:
Numquam in concilium ut possint conpulsa coire;
Nec remorari in concilio, nec crescere adaucta:

---

Ver. 559. —*tow'rds every coast impels*
*Masts, yards, and streamers, cordage, sails, and helms,*
*And planks disparted,*——] Cowper appears to have had this description of Lucretius before him, when writing the following lines, which compose a part of his very beautiful little poem, "On the Receipt of his Mother's Picture out of Norfolk:"

But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distrest,—
Me howling winds *drive devious, tempest-tost,*
*Sails ript, seams opening wide,* and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.

Few poets have been more felicitous in their description of a storm at sea, than the wild and enthusiastic Wieland. It is thus he paints the tremendous tempest raised by the avenging Oberon, in consequence of the premature and unhallowed union of Sir Huon and Amanda:

Inzwischen bricht mit fürchtenlichem sausen
Ein unerhörter sturm von allen seiten los;
Des erdballs axe kracht, der wolken schwarze schoos
Giesst feuerströme aus, das meer beginnt zu brausen,
Die wogen thürmen sich wie berge schäumend auf,
Die pinke treibt in ungewissem lauf
Der bootsmann schreyt umsonst in sturmbetaübte ohren,
Laut heult's durchs ganze schiff, weh uns! wir sind verloren!
Der ungezähmten winde wut,
Der ganze horizont in einen höllenrachen
Verwandelt, lanter glut, des schiffes stetes krachen,
Das wechselsweis bald von der tiefsten flut
Verschlungen scheint, bald, himmelan getrieben,
Auf wogenspitzen schwebt, die unter ihm zerstieben,
Dies alles, stark genug, die todten aufzuschrecken,
Musst endlich unser paar aus seinem taumel wecken.
Cant. viii. 18.

Meanwhile the tumult maddens more and more,
Fierce from all sides at once a whirlwind breaks.
Rock'd by rude gusts, th' earth confus'dly shakes,
The welkin flames with lightning vaulted o'er:
High in the air by surging tempests cast,

Masts, yards, and streamers, cordage, sails, and helms,
And planks disparted, teaching as they float
What dangers lurk unseen; what snares to lure
Unthinking mortals;—and forewarning loud
To fly the smooth temptation, nor e'en once
Trust the false waves, though deck'd in loudest laugh:
So, should'st thou make the primal seeds of aught
Once finite, instant the tumultuous war
Of adverse atoms, through the boundless void
Drives them far-distant—never more to meet,
Or met, cohere, or e'en, cohering, grow:

---

The world of waters bellows to the blast:
The vessel reels at random to and fro,
The boatswain calls in vain, while shrieks of woe
Ring thro' the staggering ship, all hope of safety past!
The wind's unbridl'd rage, the heaven that burns,
Enwrapt in flames like hell's sulphureous tides,
The crackling of the vessel's rifted sides,
That now, as rise and fall the waves by turns,
Sinks, buried in the dark, unfathom'd deep!
Now rocks upon the billow's ridgy steep,
While all beneath in foamy vapour dies;
These sounds, of power to force the dead to rise,
Awake the conscious pair from love's enchanted sleep.

Sotheby.

I cannot close this note, long as it is, without recommending to the reader's perusal, at his own leisure, that full, and, in my opinion, unrivalled description of a sea-storm, introduced by Camoens into the sixth book of his Lusiad. The passage is far too voluminous for insertion, but it begins thus:

Mas neste passo assi promptos estando,
Eis o mestre, que olhando os ares anda
O apito toca, accordão desportando
Os marinheiros d' hũa e d' outra banda, &c.

When shrilly whistling thro' the decks resounds
The master's call, and loud his voice rebounds;
Instant from converse, and from slumber start
Both bands, and instant to their toils they dart, &c.

I quote from Mr. Mickle's version, who has translated the whole with admirable spirit. On the truly poetical machinery by which this tempest was allayed, and the affrighted navigators conducted to the desired haven, I have had occasion to refer already, in the note on Book I. v. 1.

Ver. 565. *Trust the false waves, though deck'd in loudest laugh*:] See note on Book I. 8. and 505 of Book II. and hence, with much probability, the classical and accomplished Gray:

Fair *laughs* the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm:
*Regardless of the sweeping Whirlwind's sway,*
*That, hush'd in grim repose,* expects his evening pay.

Bard ii. 2.

Quorum utrumque palam fieri manifesta docet res ;
Et res progigni, et genitas procrescere posse.
Esse igitur genere in quo vis primordia rerum
Infinita palam est, unde omnia subpeditantur.
Nec superare queunt motus itaque exitiales
Perpetuo, neque in æternum sepelire salutem :
Nec porro rerum genitales, auctificeique,
Motus perpetuo possunt servare creata.
Sic æquo geritur certamine principiorum,
Ex infinito contractum tempore, bellum.
Nunc heic, nunc illic, superant vitalia rerum ;
Et superantur item : miscetur funere vagor,
Quem puerei tollunt, visentes luminis oras :
Nec nox ulla diem, neque noctem aurora, sequuta est,
Quæ non audierit, mixtos vagitibus, ægros
Ploratus, Mortis comites, et Funeris atri.

Illud in hiis obsignatum quoque rebus habere
Convenit, et memori mandatum mente tenere ;
Nihil esse, in promptu quorum natura videtur,
Quod genere ex uno consistat principiorum :
Nec quidquam, quod non permixto semine constet.
Et, quæquomque magis vis multas possidet in se,
Atque potestates, ita plurima principiorum
In sese genera, ac varias docet esse figuras.

Facts without which Creation's self would fail,
As all must thus proceed, augment, mature.
And hence the primal seeds of all that live
Must, too, be boundless, whence each want is fed.
Nor can the mortal motions that wear out
The varied forms of things, with utter doom,
Prevail for ever: nor e'en those, revers'd,
Of genial pow'r, that quicken into life,
Can, through perpetual time, that life sustain.
Thus war eternal, midst the seeds of things,
With equal triumph reigns; now here, now there,
The vital pow'rs o'ercoming, and o'ercome.
The sigh funereal mingles with the bleat
Of babes just bursting to the light of heaven;
Nor night o'er day, nor morn o'er night prevails,
But marks the discord—Infancy's shrill cry
Mixt with sick moans, th' apparitors of Death.

This too, attentive, treasure in thy mind:
That nought the sight surveys, the soul conceives,
Flows from one class of primal seeds alone.
Whate'er exists is compound; and the more
The latent powers, the energies it boasts,
The more complex its nature; rear'd to life
From seeds more various, and of various shape.

Principio, tellus habet in se corpora prima,
Unde mare inmensum, volventes frigora, funtes
Adsidue renovent; habet, ignes unde oriantur:
Nam multis subcensa locis ardent sola terræ;
Eximiis vero furit ignibus inpetus Ætnæ.
Tum porro nitidas fruges, arbustaque læta,
Gentibus humanis habet unde extollere possit:
Unde etiam fluidas frundeis, et pabula læta,
Montivago generi possit præbere ferarum;
Quâ re magna deûm mater, materque ferarum,
Et nostri genetrix hæc dicta est corporis una.

Ver. 595. *First* Earth *herself th' essential atoms holds*] In proof of his assertion, that nothing created is produced from one class of atoms alone, the poet, in the first place, adverts to the formation of the Earth, which, as before observed, the Epicurean school conceived to be an immense system, surrounded by other worlds, or other immense systems of the same genus. See notes on verse 544 and 1132 of the present book.

Ver. 595. —*th' essential atoms holds*
*Of streams and fountains, whence the main renews*, &c.] The whole of this passage is beautifully and metaphorically imitated by Statius, in his apostrophe to the earth. I have already quoted the copy in a prior note.

Ver. 604. *Hence mighty* Mother of th' immortal gods,
*Of brutes, and men, is* Earth *full frequent sign'd.*] To this effect, are the following verses in the Hymn of Orpheus, in which Earth, herself, is represented as speaking:

Μητερ μεν τε θεων, ηδε θνητων ανθρωπων·
Εκ σου γαρ και γαια, και ουρανος ειρος υπερθε,
Και ποντος, πνοιαι τε.

Mother of gods and mortal men, on me
Th' expansive heavens above, the fields below,
And airs, and seas depend.

And equally in point, as well as more generally illustrative, are the verses that follow from the celebrated Hymn to Cybele, attributed to Homer:

Μητερα μοι παντων τε θεαν, παντων τ' ανθρωπων,
Υμνει, Μουσα λιγεια, Διος θυγατηρ μεγαλοιο·
Η κροταλων τυπαισι τ' ιαχη, συν τε βρομος αυλων,
Ευαδεν, ηδε λυκων κλαγγη, χαροπων τε λεοντων,
Ουρεα τ' ηχηεντα, και ιλακτες ειαυλοι

Me, the great mother of all gods and men,
The Muse symphoneous sings, from Jove supreme
Descended:—me the trumpet's clam'rous note,
The drum's loud thunder, and the pipe acclaim,—
And wolves and lions with exulting roar,
Resounding mountains, and harmonious shades.

The deification of the Earth is differently accounted for: Mr. Bryant's system is, perhaps, after all, the most plausible, though it wants a foundation, and is, in other respects, too fanciful, especially in its etymologies. The reader will find a more general account of it in the note on ver. 1167 of this book. According to this hypothesis, the idolatry of

First Earth herself th' essential atoms holds
Of streams and fountains, whence the main renews;
Holds in herself the secret seeds of fires,
Oft the brown heath wide-parching, unperceiv'd,
And oft, like Ætna, blazing to the day:
And holds each embryon, whence, to glad mankind,
Springs the gay corn, the blossom'd fruit-tree springs,
Or whence the brutal tribes that roam at large
Draw their green banquets, and possess their shades.
Hence mighty Mother of th' Immortal Gods,
Of brutes, and men, is Earth full frequent feign'd.

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the earlier ages of the post-diluvian world are divisible into three classes, the arkite, the solar, and the ophite. The first female divinity ever invented, was, according to Mr. Bryant, a deification of the ark, under the appellation of Isis, Aphrodite, or Venus; and from the circumstance of its containing, in its womb, the whole existing world of animals—even the patriarchs themselves, who were afterwards deified and worshipped—this deity was denominated, in Egypt, where the superstition took deepest root, Da-Meter, Δημητηρ, "the mother of gods and men," the great first principle of all things. In the note above referred to, I have observed, from the same hypothesis, that she had two annual feasts appropriated to her honour; during which periods all her priests assisted in a public exhibition and procession of a little ark, typical of her original existence, and all the people pressed forwards to worship it; and that the greatest degree of joy and idolatrous exultation prevailed on these occasions. In process of time, however, as mankind descended from the period of the flood, this important event became less deeply impressed on their minds. They then beheld all things originating from the earth; from which they also conceived that the sun, moon, and stars, the habitations of their fabulous deities, and, consequently, that these deities themselves, primarily arose. On the earth, as well as the ark, they now therefore conferred the name of Da-Meter, or Δημητηρ, "the common mother of all things;" gods and men, as well as plants and animals; writing it, perhaps, originally, Γημητηρ, Ge-Meter, or "Mother-earth," which, by an easy convertibility, was tranferred into the very title bestowed on Isis, or Aphrodite. Having thus tranferred to the Earth the name or title originally applied to Isis, they also instituted a similar system of religious feasts, and this junior Da-Meter, or deified Γη, or Earth, had her own solemn processions and exhibitions, as well as the deified Ark or Isis—of which one is here described by our poet; processions and exhibitions, which were conducted with as much pomp and festivity as those originally invented in honour of Isis or Venus Da-Meter: the only difference consisting in this, that, instead of the sacred ΔΙΠ (Hip) or ark, in which, during one of the annual feasts, was placed an image of Osyris, or Noah, a *crescent car* was introduced, in which a female was placed, personifying the Goddess Earth herself; while, instead of pouring water into the ark to prove its soundness and freedom from leaking,

Hanc veteres Graiûm doctei cecinere poëtæ
Sedibus in curru bijugos agitare leones:
Aëris in spatio magnam pendere docentes
Tellurem, neque posse in terrâ sistere terram.
Adjunxere feras; quod, quam vis ecfera, proles

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sprays of roses, and other flowers, her own immediate productions, were scattered round on every side, and the priests and priestesses were overshadowed with immense quantities of crescent, or circular garlands.

Besides the name of Da-Meter, the ancients also bestowed upon the Earth, after her apotheosis, the additional appellations of Rhea, Ops, Cybele, and Mother of Ida. And, perhaps, the whole of these, like the term Da-Meter itself, were, originally, only so many different titles conferred upon Isis, Aphrodite, or Venus. The first is said to be derived from Ρεω (Reō) to flow, and, consequently, means a *fountain*: "the fountain, or first source of all things:" but, from the admitted origin of Venus, is far more applicable to her than to the Earth. It is, moreover, contended, that Ρεω and Ζεω, the signification of which are nearly alike, were convertible terms, the latter being changed into the former by the use of the Attic dialect; and that they were derived from the same Egyptian radical, whence the modern Copts have acquired their ϯCϵ and CѠ, which still mean "to drink," or "partake of the fountain." But Ζεα, Ζειλα, and Dia, were, doubtless, applied to Venus; and we can have little hesitation, therefore, in admitting that Rhea (Ρεα) was, in like manner, appropriated to her originally; and, like Da-Meter, was hence deduced as a title for the deified Ge, or Earth. With respect to the second term, Ops (ϩOϥ), there can be no doubt, we are told, that this is of arkite origin, and an early appellation of Venus: and that hence Pelopia, or Thyatira, which are commutable terms for the same place, was a city peculiarly dedicated to this goddess. It is also asserted, that Cybele (obviously from Cu-Bel, "the temple of Bel,") was only an additional appellation for Venus, Isis, or the arkite goddess: that Bel was the chief deity of the Syrians, and represented, like the Egyptians' ϩOϥ, under the form of a serpent or dragon, which was, unquestionably, an arkite emblem. From Bel, or Belial, the Greeks obtained Βελιαρ, which, consistently with this system, is interpreted by Hesychius Δρακων, Draco: a remark advanced by Mr. Allwood in support of the Bryantine theory. As to the term Idæa Mater, it is still more conspicuous, we are told, that this was deduced from Venus, than either of the others. Ida was the name of two mountains, one in Phrygia, and one in Crete: on the former, Venus was fabled to have received the judgment of Paris; and the whole island in which the latter was placed, was peculiarly consecrated to her worship. Admitting the primary hypothesis, it should seem to follow, from these observations, which I have selected with some care, that the whole of the names and titles of Γης, or the deified Earth, were derived from Isis, or Venus, the earliest female divinity personified by the idolaters of Babylon.

Ver. 607. *Paint drawn by lions in a car sublime:*] Virgil acquaints us with the same fact, in the following lines, as well as in many other places:

*Alma parens* Idæa *Deûm*, cui Dindyma cordi,
Turrigeræque urbes, *bijugique ad fræna leones:*
Æn. l. x. v. 252.

——great mother of the deities
With turrets crown'd, on Ida's holy hill,
Fierce lions rein'd, and, curb'd, obey thy will.
Dryden.

In this passage, the common editions of Dryden's translation give us *tygers*, instead of *lions*. Virgil himself, however, says nothing of *tygers*, and perhaps the English version is only a typographic error. Macrobius adds the following explanation to that of our own poet: and confirms, in a greater degree, the

Her the sage bards of Greece, in ancient song,
Paint drawn by lions in a car sublime:
Hence, teaching how, in ether pois'd, she hangs,
Unpropt by aught beneath; the savage beasts
They yok'd, and rein'd, to demonstrate how sure 610

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error of Dryden, or his transcribers: "hæc dea leonibus vehitur, validis, impetu, &c." L. i. c. 21. "This goddess is drawn by lions, animals renowned for their fire and impetuosity. These are qualities which are attributed to the heavens, within whose circumference is contained the air, that sustains and carries forwards the earth." The motive assigned by Lucretius is, however, much more pertinent and natural.

Ver. 608. ——*in ether pois'd, she hangs*
*Unpropt by aught beneath;*——]To this couplet and opinion of Lucretius, Ovid refers, in that well-known passage of his Metamorphoses:

Nec circumfuso pendebat in aëre tellus
Ponderibus librata suis. L. i.

Ere earth, self-balanc'd, was in ether hung.

Whence, perhaps, Milton:

And earth, self-balanc'd, on her centre hung.

The sublime author of the Book of Job has a passage perfectly parallel, Ch. xxvi. 7.

נטה צפון על־תהו
תלה ארץ על־בלימה

He stretcheth forth the north-pole out of chaos,
He hangeth the world upon nothing.

The north or north-pole (צפון) is here used synechdochally for the heavens at large, the inhabitants of Idumæa knowing nothing of the south. The second verse of this beit or couplet, has generally been supposed to refer to the creation of the world out of nothing; but it is hence obvious, that it rather alludes to the cosmology of Idumæa, or of Egypt; from the latter of which countries, it is probable, that the philosophers of Greece derived the doctrine before us.

Achilles Tatius, a Platonist, and historian of the sixth century, gives us the following explication of the manner in which the earth is thus suspended: "Put," says he, "a single seed of millet, or grain of any thing similar, into a bladder, and blow the bladder gradually full of air, and the seed or grain will be carried up, and retained in the middle of it. In the same manner, the earth, being on all sides pressed upon equally by the air, remains suspended in its centre." In Arat. Phænomen. This method of philosophizing, however, cannot but remind us of the Indian story of the elephant and the turtle; and is nearly as deficient in its powers of explanation.

A very different, and certainly a more poetic, if if not a more philosophic account, is offered by Lucretius, in its proper place, viz. Book V. 556, and following, of the present version; in which the reader will find a most elegant and complete developement of the Ptolemaic system. In the mean time, I cannot avoid noticing, how strictly and exquisitely Camoens, who has adopted the same astronomic hypothesis, has adhered, in a variety of instances, to his great original. A single passage shall suffice for the present:

Qual a materia seja não se enxerga,
Mas enxergasse bem que esta composto
De varios orbes, que a divina verga
Compos, e hum centro a todos so tem posto:
Volvendo, ora se abaxa, ora se erga,
Nũca sergue, ou se abaxa, e hum mesmo rosto
Por toda a parte tem, e em toda a parte
Começa a acaba, em fim por divino arte.

Cant. x.

The frame etherial various orbs compose,
In whirling circles now they fell, now rose;
Yet never rose nor fell, for still the same,
Was every movement of the wondrous frame;
Each movement still beginning, still complete,
Its author's type, self-pois'd, perfection's seat.

Mickle.

Obficiis debet molliri victa parentum:
Muralique caput summum cinxere coronâ,
Eximiis munita locis quod subtinet urbeis:
Quo nunc insigni per magnas prædita terras
Horrifice fertur divinæ Matris imago.
Hanc variæ gentes, antiquo more sacrorum,
Idæam vocitant matrem; Phrygiasque catervas
Dant comites, quia primum ex illis finibus edunt

Ver. 612. *And, with a mural crown her brows they bound,*
*Since with her tow'rs she guards man's civic rights.*] That her temples, in this grand exhibition, were guarded with this mural wreath or coronet, is still further confirmed by the following lines of Virgil:

——qualis Berecynthia mater
Invehitur curru Phrygias turrita per urbes.
L. vi. v. 784.

——in pomp she makes the Phrygian round
With golden turrets on her temples crown'd.
Dryden.

Ovid has likewise recorded the same fact, and offered the same explanation:

At cur turritâ caput est ornata coronâ?
An Phrygiis turres urbibus illa dedit? Fast. iv.

But with a crown of turrets why bedeck'd?
Is it that turrets she to Phrygia taught?

The Greeks and Romans were accustomed, on public occasions, to distribute wreaths or coronets of a variety of forms to citizens of distinguished merit of every kind: the decoration varying according to the species of merit exhibited. The Corona Muralis, of which our poet is here speaking, was bestowed by the commander in chief, as a mark of honour on the soldier who first scaled the walls of a besieged town. It was composed of gold, and ornamented with embrasures, in imitation of the battlements of fortified walls or towers: affording a happy emblem of the right which every distinct city or state has to regulate its own political constitution, and to resist any hostile attempt or encroachment on the part of its neighbours.

Our own poet Denham has here not unaptly compared the scenery of spires and battlements around Windsor to this imperial diadem:

A *crown of such majestic towers* does grace
The gods' *great mother*, when her heavenly race
Do homage to her.
Cooper's Hill.

Ver. 616. *Her many a ſtate, from holieſt legends, call*
*Parent of* Ida, *and with* Phrygian *nymphs*]
I have already observed, that there were two mountains of much celebrity thus denominated among the Greeks. One was in Phrygia, at a short distance from Troy, on the brow of which Paris is said to have adjudged the golden apple to Venus: and the other in the island of Crete, where was the immediate residence of the priests of "This mighty mother of both gods and men," who were named Curetes, but who were themselves of Phrygian descent, and to whom our poet adverts in ver. 639. In either place, therefore, this Idæan deity may have been supposed to have peculiarly resided.

The wildest young a mother's cares may tame;
And, with a mural crown her brows they bound,
Since with her tow'rs she guards man's civic rights.
Thus deckt, tremendous, round from realm to realm,
Still moves the solemn pomp, by all ador'd.
Her many a state, from holiest legends, call
Parent of IDA; and with PHRYGIAN nymphs
Surround, her fair attendants; PHRYGIAN term'd,
Since these the climes where first, as fame reports,

Ver. 619. *Since these the climes where first, as fame reports,*] That Phrygia was peopled at a very early period of the world, we may fairly conclude from an admission of the Egyptians themselves, that this country was inhabited antecedently to their own. The first occupiers were therefore probably a colony of Cuthites or Ammonians, a branch of the confederate idolaters, who were scattered in every direction from the plains of Shinar, during the erection of the city of Babel. In consequence of this early population, Phrygia became soon and extensively celebrated for her progress in letters and agriculture. The former she is said to have derived from the Egyptians, having been taught them by Hercules, who was avowedly of Egyptian descent; and respecting her knowledge of the latter, we may form some idea from the Romans having borrowed the radical of her own name, as a general appellation for grain among themselves: for there can be little doubt that the Latin term *fruges* was derived from the Greek Φρυγια (Phrygia), on the introduction of letters into Greece. See however more particularly the note on Book V. 1483; and Book VI. 1.

Upon this subject Faber has offered us a conjecture in some degree different, and I believe less tenable. Yet, though fanciful, it is ingenious. The term Idæ (Ιδαι), observes he, in its original signification, implies mountainous and woody places, as is well known to those who are acquainted with the Greek historians and etymologists; whence he infers, that as these were the original dwellings of rude uncivilized man, the term Idæa Mater is expressive of that earliest infancy of the human race, in which they were supported by acorns, or other natural and uncultivated productions; or pursued the savage life of the hunter. But, continues Faber, after the invention of agriculture, she was denominated Phrygia, from the term Φρυγειν, "to dry or dress in the sun." Whence, even upon this etymology, we may observe that the Romans denominated grain of every kind by the generic term *fruges*: as also the propriety of assigning to the Dea-Mater a body of attendants of Phrygian descent:

Since these the climes, where first, as fame reports
The field was cultur'd, and the harvest rose.

Were this criticism of Faber strictly correct, it would give us, in the name of the goddess, in her attendants, and in the ornament of her head-dress, an appropriate allusion to the three successive states in which the greater part of mankind have probably existed; 1st, In the unsettled character of hunters or shepherds, wandering from mountain to mountain, and supporting themselves with the uncultivated productions of nature, the milk of their flocks, or the casual success of their adventures in the woods. 2dly, As agriculturists, attached to particular spots,

Per terrarum orbeis fruges cœpisse creari.
Gallos adtribuunt; quia, numen quei violarint
Matris, et ingratei genitoribus inventei sint,
Significare volunt indignos esse putandos,
Vivam progeniem quei in oras luminis edant.
Tympana tenta tonant palmis; et cymbala circum
Concava, raucisonoque minantur cornua cantu,

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and living upon the labours of the plough. And, 3dly, As citizens, consociating for common security, regulated by common laws, and defending themselves from foreign attacks by walls and fortresses.

Ver. 621. *Her priests are eunuchs*]—There is a fiction recorded by many ancient writers, that those who had determined to devote themselves to the priesthood of Cybele, or the Idæa Mater, were initiated into the office by a kind of baptism in the river Gallus, a conſiderable stream in Phrygia: the waters of which had no sooner approached their lips than they became instantly delirious, and castrated themselves. Many of the Christian fathers have alluded to this tradition. St. Jerom has related the whole story as a truth; and Tertullian, from this effect of the Phrygian river, denominates the high priest of this goddeſs Archi-gallus.

There is no necessity, however, for attributing to the waters of the Gallus any such miracle. The enthusiasm engendered by superstition has in all ages been equal to such an effect. The priests of Baal, in the midst of their solemnities, were accustomed to ſhout aloud, and mangle themselves with knives and lancets, 1 Kings, xviii. 28; and long before this period, a similar kind of penance and mortification was so common even among the Hebrews themselves, in the midst of their funeral ceremonies, that Moses was expressly commanded by the Almighty to prohibit so barbarous a rite. A similar prohibition was also contained in the laws of Solon, and composed a part of the Roman law of the twelve tables, *Mulieres genas ne radunto, neve lessum funeris ergo habento.* The devotees of Syria, the votaries of Isis, and Bellona, were all equally severe upon themselves, yet none of them have exceeded the fakirs of Hindustan. In the time of our Saviour we learn, Matt. xix. 12. that there were among the Jews some "who "had made themselves eunuchs for the king-"dom of heaven's sake;" and it is well known, that several centuries afterwards, Origen submitted voluntarily, and for the same reason, to the same barbarous puniſhment. Origen, however, appears to have had more to plead in his favour, than many others who had equally mangled themselves. He had entered into a vow of celibacy, which, from being poſſeſſed of a warm and sanguineous temperament, he did not at all times find it easy to adhere to. His own confessions indeed state him to have been frequently tempted by concupiscent impulses; and fearful of his being led astray by their violence, he emasculated himself to preserve his virtue. In this respect, however, he was peculiarly unfortunate; for after having submitted to so cruel an operation, he was condemned by an ecumeni-

The field was cultur'd, and the harvest rose.
Her priests are eunuchs—emblem this devis'd
To teach that sons rebellious to their sires,
Or those the sacred fame that dare traduce
Of her who bore them, never shall themselves,
Worthless and vile, by gods and men abhorr'd,
Boast aught of babe to glad their longing sight.
With vig'rous hand the clam'rous drum they rouse
And wake the sounding cymbal: the hoarse horn
Pours forth its threat'ning music, and the pipe

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cal council, for not having had fortitude enough to resist the temptations to which he was exposed, and which constituted, it was added, a chief part of his duty.

Ver. 627. *With vig'rous hand the clam'rous drum they rouſe*
*And wake the ſounding cymbal: the hoarſe horn*] This wild uproar and intermixture of instruments, priests, and people, are thus imitated by Ariosto:

Un muover d'arme, un correr di persone,
E di talacimanni un gridar d'alto,
E di tamburi un suon misto, e di trombe
Il mondo assorda; e'l ciel par ne rimbombe.
ORLAND. FUR. c. xviii.

The clash of arms, the concourse of the croud
Th' enraged priests aloft, and ſhouting loud,
Timbrils and trumpets with commingled sound,
Stun every ear, and thro' the heavens rebound.

A ſimilar deſcription is given us by Catullus, the friend and contemporary of Lucretius:

*Plangebant* alii proceris *tympana* palmis
Aut tereti tenues tinnitus aere ciebant:
Multis *raucisonos* efflabant *cornua* bombos,
Barbaraque horribili stridebat *tibia cantu.*
lxiv. 264.

Some strike the drum with loud rebounding roar;
Some through the taper trump shrill clangors pour:
These the hoarse horn, while those discordant strain
The shrieking pipe, till every nerve complain.

Ver. 629. ——*the pipe*
*With* PHRYGIAN *airs diſtracts the madd'ning mind;*] The movement, termed by the ancients, Phrygian, was the most enthusiastic, and best calculated to fill the soul with fury, of any musical mode the Greeks were acquainted with; and was, in this respect, diametrically opposite to the Lydian, which had more of the modern piano, and was well adapted to subdue the fiercer passions of the breast, or melt it into feelings of tenderness and love. Dryden, therefore, has, with much critical accuracy, represented the old minstrel Timotheus as selecting this latter genus for the purpose of softening the violence of soul, to which he had just before excited the Macedonian conqueror by the true Phrygian movement:

Softly sweet, in *Lydian* measures,
Soon he sooth'd his soul to pleasures.

Et Phrygio stimulat numero cava tibia menteis : 620
Telaque præportant, violenti signa furoris ;

The wonderful accounts we have received of the effects of music in ancient times, compared with what occur in the present day, have induced many persons to regard the whole as fabulous: while others have imagined that, with all our boasting, the ancients far exceeded us in their knowledge of harmonics. This last is certainly, however, an erroneous opinion, for we do not know, anterior to the invention of Guido Aretine, in the thirteenth century, that musicians had ever the smallest idea of counterpoint, or the science of harmoniously combining the notes of different diapasons, which has infinitely added to the extent and perfection of the musical art. The Greeks had, unquestionably, three distinct genera, and perhaps a greater variety of modes than exist in the present day; but these genera were never blended together so as to produce the effect of harmony;—the diatonic being always employed separately from the chromatic, and this again from the enharmonic, and each merely differing from the other two by a variation in its intervals. How then comes it to pass, if there be any truth in the records or traditions referred to by Lucretius and Dryden, if almost every passion could be either excited or allayed, and a variety of diseases removed or mitigated by the skilful performer in past ages, that we so seldom meet with the same wonderful effects in the present day? I incline to believe, that much more is narrated of the effects of ancient music, than was ever justified by fact; but it would evince a most unreasonable scepticism, to discredit every thing that is related upon this subject, because many of the cases recorded are fairly and incontrovertibly attested. I incline to believe then, also, that much of this deficiency of influence among ourselves is produced by the very perfection itself, which the musical art has acquired in modern times; and that, on the great mass of the people,—in reality, on every one who is not a scientific student, and capable of remarking, by strict and rigid attention, the harmonic relation of the individual tones of one part with those of another,—pure and simple melody has a much more lively and empassioned effect than the most correct and elaborate piece of harmony, or music in parts, though performed with the advantage of the most brilliant execution. Of this, indeed, the experience of every day is a sufficient proof. Concerts of instrumental music, alone, are not so generally attended upon as those combined with vocal, in which there is less room for the display of harmonic relations: and, if I be not much mistaken, the attention of an uninstructed audience is more rigidly fixt on a solo, whether vocal or instrumental, than on a trio or a glee. The mind of the multitude is distracted by the richness and variety of compound music; and the nervous system is rather generally agitated, than particularly excited to any individual passion. The grandest chorus in an Oratorio, or the fullest finale in an opera, produces much less impression upon an audience, than a single song, or unsupported air; and the Braes of Ballendyne, Logan Water, or the Birks of Endermay, give more sensible pleasure, than the most laboured passage of Haydn, Pleyel, Giornovichi, or Viotti. It is impossible for any one not to have noticed this, who has ever frequented places of public amusement. The former are never encored, but the latter repeatedly; and, provided the music be descriptive, or sentimental, even the merit of the voice itself is not of extreme consequence.—Mrs. Jordan receives as hearty a welcome as Madame Banti. Simple, unsupported melody, is within the comprehension of the people at large; but the complicated and elaborate overture, or chorus, is too perplext for them to understand. The same thing occurs in other facts of a similar kind. Men of letters, and liberal education, may admire the majestic style of Dr. Johnson, or the brilliancy of Mr. Burke; but the uninstructed multitude will, at all times, be infinitely better pleased, as well as more affected, with the unadorned simplicity of De Foe's Robinson Crusoe, or Keate's Voyage to the Pelew Islands.

Music, moreover, is a stimulus, acting in some degree on all elastic bodies, animate or inanimate, with the force of a blow; and diminishing hereby,

With Phrygian airs distracts the madd'ning mind, 630
While arms of blood the fierce enthusiasts wield

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and in various cases totally destroying, the attraction of cohesion. In some description of bodies, it produces more effect than in others; yet it does not appear, I believe, in any instance, that this effect, or influence, results from a mere assemblage of different sounds, or rather from a mere assemblage of the concordant sounds of different diapasons; but is singly excited by some individual tone of sound, simple and uncombined, and in a certain mysterious manner symphoneous with the constitution of the body affected. Dogs, rats, and other animals, who would be frightened away by a sudden burst of music in parts, have their attention frequently rivetted, in the most fixed and extraordinary manner, by the operation and frequent recurrence of certain notes consentaneous with their feelings, or nervous conformation.

The French, among other fancies, not long ago made a public trial of the effect of music upon elephants; and for this purpose, erected an orchestra near the booth of a male and female animal of this description. The concert was opened with some light, varied airs, and a base in F major, in the moderate character: it passed on to a trio, from Gluck in F minor; a solo, likewise in a minor key, and some few overtures played in full harmony by all the band together. The animals were at first frightened; but afterwards pleased with whatever was performed, and in whatever key. But the piece that far most affected them was the beautiful canzonette, O ma tendre Musette! executed *as a solo*, and *without accompaniments*. See Letter to the authors of the Decade Philosophique.

The Dutchman, who is related by Morhoff to have had a power of breaking goblets and wine-glasses with his voice when exalted to a certain pitch, was incapable of producing the same effect by an equal quantity of sound produced from a combination of different notes; and must have been so, though it had equalled the volume of the fifteen hundred musicians assembled a few years since, at Westminster-abbey, to commemorate the birth of Handel. Kircher, in the same manner, informs us of some particular stones that would tremble excessively at the sound of one peculiar organ-pipe, but were insensible to the action of every other. Such being the effect of the melopœa, or simple melody, upon the inanimate and brute-creation, it is impossible that it should not have an equal effect upon certain combinations or classes of human nerves: and I am persuaded, that in a variety of diseases, in which the nervous system is the chief seat of attack, it might often be introduced with advantage, were music ever scientifically studied as a branch of therapeutics. Among the ancients, we have many diseases mentioned as having been cured by music, which, I am very ready to confess, appear to have been much more benefited by its mechanical, than by its sympathetic effects. It was a common prescription in rheumatic and gouty complaints, as we learn from Theophrastus, Aulus Gellius, and even Galen himself. But it is highly probable, that all its beneficial results, or at least the greater part of them, in these cases, flowed rather from the exercise of dancing, with which it was always accompanied, together with the perspiration, and copious drinking, which attended such exercise, than from any internal or sympathetic influence it was capable of exerting. When, therefore, Pliny informs us, Lib. xxviii. cap. i. upon the authority of Cato, that persons, with strained and dislocated limbs, had frequently recovered from the use of a remedy of this kind, to render the assertion at all credible, we must believe, that, from the violence of the strain in the latter case, the limb had been merely supposed to have been dislocated, than that a reduction of the luxated bone should hence actually have occurred. Although, undoubtedly, if a man, who had dislocated his knee or his ancle, could be prevailed upon to engage in a brisk dance, the action of the dance itself might as effectually, in some instances, restore the injured joint to its due situation, as the more topical and scientific assistance of the chirurgical practitioner himself.

It is not even improbable, that the cure of the bite

Ingratos animos, atque inpia pectora volgi
Conterrere metu quæ possint numine divæ.
Ergo, quom primum, magnas invecta per urbeis,
Munificat tacitâ mortaleis muta salute:
Ære atque argento sternunt iter omne viarum,
Largificâ stipe ditantes; ninguuntque rosarum
Floribus, umbrantes Matrem, comitumque catervam.
Heic armata manus, Curetas nomine Græcei
Quos memorant Phrygios, inter se sorte catervis
Ludunt, in numerumque exsultant, sanguine fletei:

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of the tarantula, if, in reality, music have any effect upon this disease at all,—of which the celebrated Neapolitan professor Cirillo has much doubted, but which is supported by the concurrent testimony of Redi, Mead, and Fontana,—is performed in the same mechanical way. Like opium, the poison of the tarantula is found to produce a very considerable disposition to stupor and apoplexy. Strong, nervous stimulants, continued till the violence of their influence have subsided, must, in both cases, therefore, be highly rational and beneficial; and it is not at all improbable, in persons more especially of irritable constitutions, that musical tones upon a key, adapted to the peculiar genus of their nervous system, and incessantly persevered in, may protract life, whether accompanied with dancing, or not, but especially in the latter case, till the extraneous and morbid matter have ceased to operate, and be entirely discharged through some of the emunctories of the body. Quere, Is it altogether irrational to employ such a stimulus in the desperate case of canine madness? But in diseases strictly mental, the powers of the melopœa might, I think, be more advantageously studied and made use of, than in any other class of disorders whatever; and upon which, indeed, it might operate by its own sympathetic influence. Alexander, Scipio, Saul, the attendants on Orpheus, or the Mater Idæa of Lucretius, are not the only persons of whom we have credible reports, that their passions were either maddened or sobered by different applications of different musical powers. Niewentyt and South, in modern times, make mention of similar facts. Eric, king of Denmark, is reported to have been roused, at all times, to the most furious acts, by the performance of certain compositions of a musician, whom he pensioned. And Boyle, who has professedly written on this subject, relates the case of a woman, who could never avoid shedding tears, as also that of a man, who could never retain his urine, upon the performance of particular tunes, symphoneous with their respective constitutions.

But it is not the *music* of the times, but the *manners* also that have changed, and hereby rendered the above, and similar effects, much less frequent than might otherwise have been expected, even allowing that the most scientific attention had been paid to sympathetic melody. The simpler the sphere of life in which mankind move, unquestionably the stronger the passions to which they are subjected. Whether the exercise of such violent passions be more or less

To fright th' unrighteous crowds, and bend profound
Their impious souls before the pow'r divine.
Thus moves the pompous idol through the streets,
Scatt'ring mute blessings, while the throngs devout
Strew, in return, their silver and their brass,
Loading the paths with presents, and o'ershade
The heavenly form, and all th' attendant train
With dulcet sprays of roses, pluckt profuse.
A band select before them, by the GREEKS
CURETES call'd, from PHRYGIAN parents sprung,
Sport with fantastic chains, the measur'd dance

for the general benefit of society, is not now an object of inquiry: but it is an indubitable fact, that before mankind become tamed into a relish for civil society and habit, education and example have taught them to command their own feelings; their passions, as they are fewer, are more active, and of course more easily worked upon by any consentaneous stimulus whatever.

Music, then, when employed in the form of simple and unsupported melody, is a natural stimulus, operating upon the constitution of inanimate, as well as animate beings; but far more impressively upon the latter. And we perceive clearly why, in the earlier and less cultivated ages of the world, the powers of melody were possest of a much more general influence than in the present day, even when carried to its utmost degree of perfection. We perceive, clearly, why the highland pipe, the reed of Pan, the harp of Ossian, or the rude and barbarous songs or instruments of the natives of Otaheite, Africa, or America, should possess a greater enchantment over their respective audiences, than the most elaborate music of Europe over the more polished societies to which it is addressed. The passions of the former are stronger, and they are sooner and more violently affected by the application of general stimulants of every kind.

Still, however, in the present day, and resisted as it is by the present complicated system of passions and manners, its effects are often too obvious to be questioned. And I am confident, that the science of melody might be much more effectually employed by our modern empyrics in the extirpation of a variety of chronic diseases, than the occult and pretended powers, either of animal magnetism, or metallic tractors. We need not recur for its effects, with the Platonic philosophers, to their anima mundi, nor, with Baptista Porta, to magic; its mode of influence is as obvious, and in definite circumstances, I apprehend, as unequivocal as those of gravitation, or muscular motion.

Ver. 640. *A band select before them,——*
*Sport with fantastic chains, the measur'd dance*
*Weaving enfuriate,——*] These kinds of devotional processions and dancings were not confined to Greece alone, but appear to have been in common use among ancient nations of every diversified religion. They constituted a part of the ceremonies of the Hebrews themselves; and hence, at the time of

Terrificas capitum quatientes numine cristas,
Dictæos referunt Curetas, quei Jovis illum
Vagitum in Cretâ quondam obcultasse feruntur;
Quom puerei circum puerum pernice choreâ, 635

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the removal of the ark from the family of Abinadab, "David, and all the house of Israel, played before Jehovah on all manner of instruments made of fir-wood, even on harps and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.—And David danced before Jehovah with all his might." Sam. ii. chap. vi. 5—14. And it appears, in the next chapter, that Michal, his consort, was cursed with barrenness, for having despised the sacred solemnity.

In the beautiful oriental story of Dushwanta, and Sacoontala, whence the poet Chalidas drew the subject for his Fatal Ring, a drama which Sir William Jones has elegantly translated from the Sanscreet, we meet with a similar procession. Dushwanta was on the road that led to the recluse habitation of the spotless Sacoontala: "He departed," says the historian, "under the escort of a numerous army, composed of horse and foot, of elephants and chariots; he marched along, amid the shouts of the soldiers, resembling the roaring of lions, the clangor of the shell or trumpet, the rattling of chariot-wheels, &c. As the king was passing, there was a buz of applause. The women, anxious to behold their prince, in all the exalted splendour of majesty, stood upon the tops of lofty terraces—they shouted for joy, and *a shower of flowers* was sprinkled down upon his head, while here and there *troops of the priesthood stood chanting his praise.*" Wilkins's Translation. See Dalrymple's Oriental Repository, Vol. II.

But the Phrygian dance, here referred to, seems to be chiefly imitated, or, perhaps, only retained, in all its extravagance, on the annual return of the Hindu festivity of ablution in the waters of the Ganges. See Mem. Nat Inst. Sciences Morales et Politiques, tom. iv. p. 41. 42. Mem. de M. Lescallier.

Ver. 644. —*shaking their tremendous crests.*] The idea forms a part of the well-known description of Hector, when about to embrace his infant son, who immediately clung to his nurse's bosom:

——πατρος φιλου οψιν ατοχβεις
Ταρβησας χαλκον τε ιδε λοφον ιππιοχαιτη
Δεινον απ' ακροτατης κορυβος νευοντα νοησας.

Il. Z. 467.

Scar'd at the sight of his beloved sire,
The brass deep-dreading, and the hairy crest
That shook tremendous o'er his nodding helm.

Ver. 645. *These picture, haply, the* Dictæan *train,*
*Alike* Curetes *term'd, as fame reports,* &c.] Saturn, in consequence of the decree of the Fates, that he should be dethroned and expelled his kingdom by one of his sons, was accustomed, according to the Greek mythologists, to destroy and devour them as soon as they were born, intending hereby to frustrate the determination of the Fates themselves. Rhæa, Cybele, or the Mater Idæa of Lucretius, for she had an infinite variety of names, was the wife of Saturn, and was delivered of Jupiter in the island of Crete; whose life she endeavoured to preserve from the barbarous custom of her husband, by concealing him, at first, in a secret and retired cave, and afterwards, by entrusting him to the care of six brothers of his own age, named Curetes, whom she designed for, and afterwards actually made, priests to herself. These companions of the infant Jupiter she instructed, at all times, to encompass him, and drown his cries with their clashing shields, or the music of their cymbals; on which last instrument they had been already taught to perform, whenever Saturn was at hand, and hunting for the young divinity.

Weaving enfuriate, charm'd with human blood,
And madly shaking their tremendous crests.
These picture, haply, the Dictæan train,
Alike Curetes term'd, as fame reports,
Who drown'd the infant cries of Jove in Crete,

---

To the whole of this tradition Callimachus refers to in his hymn to Jupiter:

Ουλα δε Κουρητες σε πεμι, προλιν αρχησαντο,
Τευχεα πεπληγοντες, ινα Κρονος ουασιν ηχην
Ασπιδος εισαιοι, και μη σεο κουριξοντος. L. 52.

Thee the Curetes, when a babe, conceal'd
With close commingl'd dance, and clashing shield;
Thus striking loud their arms o'er Saturn's ear
To drown thine infant cries of grief and fear.

The origin of this fable is thus developed upon Mr. Bryant's system: From Da-Meter, or the deified earth, "the common mother of gods and men," Saturn proceeded, as her first-born offspring. But Saturn, as his name imports, is a type, either of Ether itself, or the ethereal fires, as the sun, moon, and stars; and differs not essentially from the Greek Ουρανος, which is literally, "the heavens."

In process of time, however, Saturn is feigned to have married the deified Γης, or Da-Meter; and from this junction proceeded Jupiter. But Xuth, or Xuth-P'-Ait-Or, (Jupiter) "the temple of inspiration of the radiant Xuth," or "Xuth, the sun," was, undoubtedly, an arkite deity; and so precisely accords, as he is described by Herodotus, with Noah or Osiris, that there can be no doubt of both being the same person. Xuth, Jupiter, or Osiris, was, therefore, the male deity, and supreme object of arkite idolatry, as Isis, Aphrodite, or Venus, was the female. The Curetes (Cur-Ait-Es, "most illustrious luminaries,") here spoken of as the companions or educators of Jupiter, were so many priests ministering to him as the arkite deity: and the remainder of the fable, which asserts the strong inclination of Saturn to destroy and devour him, and that these Curetes surrounded and defended him with their shields, imports a contest between the idolatry of the sun, and that of the ark, at a period when the latter was either in a state of infancy, or at a low ebb; and the vigour with which its cause was espoused by its priests and votaries: a vigour, indeed, which, according to the prosecution of the fable, was eventually crowned with the completest success. For we are told, that Jupiter, or the arkite deity, at length, overcame Saturn, or the solar deity, and banished him from Heaven, affording a type of the triumph of the arkite worship, or the religion of Isis and Osiris in Egypt; from which country, there can be no doubt that the Helladians derived the whole of this story.

The fable of Saturn's devouring his own offspring is, however, highly beautiful, if considered under another and a more obvious allegory. Saturn, or Chronos, was the first-born of Cybele, or the Dea-Mater, and the great parent of all beings, whether gods or men. As Chronos, he was also the sun himself, the prime fountain of light and heat, which his name immediately implies:—Chronos (קרן) meaning nothing more than *irradiation*, or *ethereal fire*. According to the systems of most of the ancient, as well as most of the modern philosophers, the corruption or destruction of one thing is but the generation of another;—and the heat of the sun destroys what its heat has also brought to perfection. The great luminary, and original fountain of all things, was hence allegorically represented as devouring his own offspring. The allegory became, in process of time, a part of popular mythology; and human sacrifices were offered to him in Crete, Carthage, and Latium, as also in every other country in which his worship prevailed. See note on Book I. 3[illegible].

Armatei, in numerum pulsarent æribus æra,
Ne Saturnus eum malis mandaret adeptus,
Æternumque daret matri sub pectore volnus.
Propterea, magnam armatei Matrem comitantur:
Aut, quia significant divam prædicere, ut armis,
Ac virtute, velint patriam defendere terram;
Præsidioque parent, decorique, parentibus esse.

Quæ, bene et eximie quam vis disposta ferantur,
Longe sunt tamen a verâ ratione repulsa.
Omnis enim per se divôm natura, necesse est,
Inmortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur,

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Ver. 650. ——*lest* Saturn *the shrill shriek*
*Should trace, and* Rhæa *shed eternal tears.*] Of Rhæa, see the preceding note. Saturn is represented by different traditions to have been the husband, the son, and brother of Rhæa. He was once imprisoned by his brother Titan, in consequence of a dispute between them, and liberated from his confinement by his son Jupiter. Still apprehending, however, in consequence of the declaration of the oracle upon this subject, that Jupiter would seize from him his crown, and subvert his government, he continued to devise a variety of plots to destroy him; and hence it occurred, that Jupiter was at length compelled to depose him; and actually banished him from the island of Crete, over which he had reigned. Saturn fled, with all speed, from the fury of his son, who still pursued him, and secreted himself, according to Virgil, in the country which, on this account, was afterwards denominated Latium, or the *hiding-place*. Here he collected, from all quarters, a large body of subjects, and appears to have learnt wisdom from his adversity; for he drew up a most excellent code of laws, governed with impartial justice, and even paternal affection, and is thus said to have introduced among mortals the Golden Age:

Is genus indocile ac dispersum montibus altis
Composuit, legesque dedit; Latiumque vocari
Maluit, his quoniam *latuisset* tutus in oris.
Aurea, quæ perhibent, illo sub rege fuerunt
Sæcula: sic placidâ populos in pace regebat;
Æneid. viii. 321.

The men, disperst on hills, to towns he brought;
And laws ordain'd, and civil customs taught;
And Latium call'd *the land where safe he lay*
From his unduteous son, and his usurping sway.
With his mild empire peace and plenty came,
And hence the golden times deriv'd their name.
Dryden.

Vossius, in consequence of Saturn's being reported, by another tradition, to have been the son of Cœlum and Terra (heaven and earth), believes him to be synonimous with Adam: he endeavours to trace his name from the Hebrew verb sotar, *to lie hid;* and imagines that, in this etymology, he finds an equal reference to the flight and migration of Saturn to the

When round the boy divine, in arms they danc'd,
Boys still themselves, and beat to measur'd sounds
Their clashing shields, lest Saturn the shrill shriek
Should trace, and Rhæa shed eternal tears.
Thus these the matron-goddess now precede:
Or else, perchance, they paint how ev'ry breast
Should burn with patriot fire, and ev'ry arm
Prove the firm guardian of a parent's years.

All these, though pageants well-devis'd, and bold,
Wide wander still from philosophic fact.
For, far from mortals, and their vain concerns,
In peace perpetual dwell th' immortal gods:

---

country of Latium, and the retreat of Adam from the presence of the Almighty in the garden of Eden. De Philosoph. cap. vi. Cicero, however, gives us a very different derivation of the term Saturn; and endeavours, at the same time, to account for the romantic story of his eating his own children. "He was denominated Saturn," observes he, "from his extreme age—his having been *saturated* with years. He is represented as having been accustomed to devour his sons, because time consumes the different spaces of months and years; and though filled with the ages that are elapsed already, continues still insatiable." Saturnus appellatus est quod saturetur annis, &c. de Nat. Deor. l. ii. The preceding note offers however, if I mistake not, a much happier allegory.

Ver. 658. *For, far from mortals, and their vain concerns,*
*In peace perpetual dwell th' immortal gods:*]

These six verses are to be found, without any alteration, in Book I. 57, and following: in the note on which passage I have observed, that the Epicureans never meant to exclude the existence of beings superior to man both in rank and happiness; beings whom they denominated and regarded as gods, but whose faculties were incapable, either of creating, or governing the universe; and who were themselves dependent upon the supreme cause of all things. These exalted spirits seem to have constituted, in the Epicurean creed, what the order of angels constitute in the Christian, only with this difference, that the latter, though perfectly happy, and exempt from cares and sorrows, are constantly engaged in the superintendence of the moral world. "Ne se peut-il point," says Leibnitz, "qu'il y a un grand espace au delà de la region des etoiles? Que se soit le ciel empyrée ou non, toujours cet espace immense qui environne toute cette region pourra être rempli de bonheur et de gloire. Il pourra etre conçu comme l'ocean, où se rendent les fleuves de toutes les creatures bien heureuses, quand elles seront venues à leur perfection dans le systeme des etoiles." Theod. p. i. 19.

Without translating this passage, I shall give the verses of Akenside upon it, who denominates this seat of felicity, and, probably, with a reference to Lucretius as well as to Leibnitz:

Semota a nostris rebus, sejunctaque, longe.
Nam, privata dolore omni, privata periclis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur, neque tangitur irâ.
Terra quidem vero caret omni tempore sensu;
Sed, quia multarum potitur primordia rerum,
Multa, modis multis, ecfert in lumina solis.
Heic, si quis mare Neptunum, Cereremque vocare

---

Th' empyreal waste, where *happy spirits* hold,
*Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode.*
Pleas. of Imag. I. 202.

The disembodied spirits of good and virtuous men, are represented in the same glorious system, as associating with them, and partaking of their felicity. No idea can be more consoling to those who are left behind; and it forms, as it ought to do, the common theme of our monumental apostrophes. Camoens thus begins a beautiful sonnet upon the death of his friend, Donna Catalina de Ataside.

Alma minha gentil, que te partiste
Taã cedo desta vida descontente,
*Responsa lá no ceo eternamemte,*
E viva en cà na terra sempre triste.

Go, gentle spirit! now supremely blest,
From scenes of pain and struggling virtue go!
*From thy immortal seat of heavenly rest*
Behold us ling'ring in a world of woe!
Hayley.

Ver. 663. *Vice no revenge, and virtue draws no boon.*] Happiness, according to Epicurus, was totally inconsistent with a subjection to human passions of every kind. The tranquil beatitude of superior beings could never, therefore, be disturbed either by suffering virtue, or triumphant vice. Upon this subject we have his own words, as recorded by Diogenes Laertius, x. 139: Το μακαριον, και αφθαρτον, ουτε αυτο πραγματα εχει, ουτε αλλῳ παρεχει· ὡστε ουτε οργαις, ουτε χαρισι, συνεχεται: which passage Cicero has thus rendered: Quod beatum æternumque sit, id nec habere ipsum negotii quidquam, nec exhibere alteri; itaque neque irâ, neque gratiâ, teneri. De Nat. Deor. i. 17. "That which is blessed and immortal can never be disturbed with concerns either of its own or of other beings; nor can it be affected either with love or hatred."

Mr. Cowper, following the general, but erroneous opinion entertained concerning the tenets of this school of philosophy, is hence rather too severe upon it in the following verses:

Yet thus we doat, refusing, while we can,
Instruction, and inventing to ourselves
Gods, such as guilt makes welcome, *gods that sleep*
*Or disregard our follies, or that sit*
*Amus'd spectators of this bustling world.*
Task, Book V.

Annæus Seneca has imitated this verse of our poet most obviously, in the following address to Fortune:

——Sed cur idem
Qui tanta regis, sub quo vasti
Pondera mundi librata suos
Ducunt orbes; hominum nimium

Each self dependent, and from human wants
Estrang'd for ever. There no pain pervades,
Nor dangers threaten; every passion sleeps,
Vice no revenge, and virtue draws no boon.
Meantime the earth sensation never knows;
But, blest with the rude principles of things,
In various mode hence various forms she rears.
Call, if thou chuse it, the resounding deep
Neptune, and Ceres term the golden grain;

Securus ades? non solicitus
Prodesse bonis, nocuisse malis. Hipol.

Whence springs it then, that thou, whose power
Sways every scene through every hour,
The radiant orbs, through ether hurl'd,
The balance of the buoyant world,
Should'st look with unconcern below
On human weal and human woe,
Unanxious to reward the just,
Or tread th' unrighteous to the dust.

See also note on Book I. 62.

Ver. 667. *Call, if thou chuse it, the resounding deep Neptune, and Ceres term the golden grain;*] Vida had, probably, our poet in his memory, when he wrote the following:

Quid cum Neptunum dicunt mare, vina Lyæum,
Et Cererem frumenta——
Poetic iii. 123.

They now name Ceres for the golden grain,
Bacchus for wine, and Neptune for the main.
Pitt.

It is not often the philosophers of a nation, but the people themselves, who thus multiply gods, and trace, in every attribute or operation of one Supreme Creator, a distinct and adorable existence. Hesiod enumerates thirty thousand deities, acknowledged and worshipped in his own day; and Bruxillus, long afterwards, indeed, declared in the Roman Senate, that the divinities avowed by the state amounted to at least two hundred and eighty thousand. But the enlightened philosopher, whether among the Greeks or the Romans, who admitted a supreme intelligence of any kind, seldom divided the godhead, and contemplated this confused assemblage of popular divinities as nothing more than mere images of his different attributes and operations. In this belief the more intelligent of the poets themselves united; and most of them could associate with Æschylus, in the assertion: Ζευς εστιν αιθηρ, Ζευς τε γη, Ζευς δε ουρανος, Ζευς τα παντα. Strom. v. "Jupiter is the air, Jupiter is the earth, Jupiter is the heaven, all is Jupiter:" or, as Alexander the Epicurean expresses it: "the supreme power is sometimes denominated Jupiter, sometimes Apollo, sometimes Pallas." Hunc deum appellavit aliquando Jovem, aliquando Apollinem, et aliquando Palladem. Albert. Magn. Phys. Tract iii. c. 13.

So Virgil:

Ab Jove principium, Musæ: Jovis omnia plena.
All springs from Jove, and all of Jove is full.
Ecl. iii. 60.

It is the same among the Asiatics. The unlettered Hindu, like the unlettered citizen of ancient Rome, pays his homage to deities without number; but the learned regards the eternal Brema as one and the same power under all this endless divarication,

Constituet fruges, et Bacchi numine abuti
Mavolt, quam laticis proprium proferre vocamen ;
Concedamus, ut hic terrarum dictitet orbem
Esse deûm Matrem, dum verâ re tamen ipse.
Sæpe itaque, ex uno tondentes gramina campo,
Lanigeræ pecudes, et equorum duellica proles,
Buceriæque greges, eodem sub tegmine cœli,
Ex unoque sitim sedantes flumine aquaï,
Dissimili vivunt specie, retinente parentem
Naturam ; et mores generatim quæque imitantur :
Tanta est, in quo vis genere herbæ, materiaï
Dissimilis ratio ; tanta est in flumine quoque.
Hinc porro, quem vis animantem ex omnibus una
Ossa, cruor, venæ, color, humor, viscera, nervei,
Constituunt ; quæ sunt porro, distantia longe,

---

and exclaims, " Thou art the prime Creator, eternal God ! Thou art the Supreme ! by thee the universe was spread abroad ! Thou art Vayoo, the God of the winds ; Agnee, the God of fire ; Varoon, the God of the oceans !" See " Sketches relating to the History, Religion, Learning, and Manners of the Hindus," printed for Cadell, 1790. Or, as it is similarly expressed in the Yajur Veda : " Thou art Brema ! Thou art Vishnu ! Thou art Kodra ! Thou art Prajapat ! Thou art Deïonta ! Thou art air ! Thou art Andri ! Thou art the moon ! Thou art sustenance ! Thou art Djam ! Thou art the earth ! Thou art the world ! O lord of the world ! To thee, humble adoration ! O soul of the world ! Thou, who superintendest the actions of the world ! who destroyest the world ! who createst the pleasures of the world ! O life of the world ! The visible and invisible worlds are the sport of thy power ! Thou art the sovereign, O universal soul ! To thee, humble adoration ! O thou, of all mysteries, the most mysterious ! O thou, who art exalted beyond all perception or imagination ! Thou, who hast neither beginning nor end ! To thee, humble adoration !" See Anquetil Duperon's Latin Translation of the Oupnekhat : or, as it is written by Sir Wm. Jones, *Upanishad*. Tom. i. Paris. 1802 : as also note on ver. 999 of the present book.

Be Bacchus wine, its vulgar source forgot,
And e'en this mass of senseless earth define
Parent of gods; no harm ensues,—but mark,
'Tis fiction all, by vital facts disprov'd.
Thus varies earth in product; and, alike
In primal seeds, thus varies all she bears.
The steed, the steer, the fleecy flock that range
Beneath the same pure sky, from the same fount
Their thirst that quench, and o'er the flow'ry lawn
Crop the same herbage, differ still, through time,
In form generic; each parental stamp
Retaining close, from sire to sire propell'd.
Such the vast variance of primordial seeds;
Through every herb, through every fountain such.
Each form, moreo'er, of animated life
Compounded, flows from muscle, bone, and nerve,
Vein, heat, and moisture; yet e'en these comprize

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The resemblance between this address, and the following Orphic verses, in the Book *de Mundo*, as quoted by Apuleius, is peculiarly striking:

Ζευς πρωτος γενετο, Ζευς ὑστατος αρχικεραυνος,
Ζευς κεφαλη, Ζευς μεσσα. Διος δ' εκ παντα τετυκται·
Ζευς αρσην γενετο, Ζευς αμβροτος επλετο νυμφη·
Ζευς ποθμην γαιης τα και ουρανου αστερoεντος·
Ζευς πνοιη παντων: Ζευς ακαματα πυρος ορμη·
Ζευς ποντου ριζα· Ζευς ἡλιος ἠδε σελἠνη
Ζευς βασιλευς· Ζευς αυτος απαντων αρχιγενεθλος·
Εν κρατος εις Δαιμων γενετο, μεγας αρχος απαντων·
Παντα γαρ εν μεγαλῳ Ζηνος τασδε σωματι κειται.

Of which the reader may accept the following version:

Jove first exists, whose thunders roll above;
Jove last, Jove midmost: all proceeds from Jove.
Female is Jove, immortal Jove is male,
Jove the broad earth, the heavens' irradiate pale.
Jove is the boundless spirit, Jove the fire
That warms the world with feeling and desire.
The sea is Jove, the sun, the lunar ball,
Jove king supreme, the sov'reign source of all.
All power is his: to him all glory give,
For his vast form embraces all that live.

Dissimili perfecta figurâ principiorum.
Tum porro, quæquomque igni flammata cremantur,
Si nihil præterea, tamen hæc in corpore aluntur,
Unde ignem jacere, et lumen submittere, possint;
Scintillasque agere, ac late differre favillam.

Cætera, consimili mentis ratione peragrans,
Invenies igitur multarum semina rerum
Corpore celare, et varias cohibere figuras.
Denique, multa vides, quibus et color et sapor unâ,
Religione animum turpi quom tangere pacto,
Reddita sunt cum odore; in primis pleraque dona:
Hæc igitur variis debent constare figuris:
Nidor enim penetrat, quâ sucus non it in artus:
Sucus item seorsum, et seorsum sapor, insinuatur
Sensibus; ut noscas primis differre figuris.
Dissimiles igitur formæ glomeramen in unum
Conveniunt; et res permixto semine constant.
Quin etiam, passim nostris in versibus ipsis
Multa elementa vides multis communia verbis;
Quom tamen inter se versus ac verba, necesse est,
Confiteare alia ex aliis constare elementis.
Non, quo multa, parum communis, litera currat,
Aut nulla inter se duo sint ex omnibus eidem;
Sed, quia non volgo paria omnibus omnia constant:

Full many an atom, each, of shape unlike.
Thus fire itself is complex; for if nought
Deep blend besides, the germs, at least, combine
Of heat, smoke, ashes, and translucent light:
And reas'ning thus, thy vig'rous mind may deem
Still pow'rs beyond lurk deeper though unknown.
Oft the same substance, as the fragrant gums
Burnt o'er the altar to th' offended gods,
Emits both taste and odour, hence from seeds
Educ'd, of various figures; odours oft
Piercing the nerves that tastes essay in vain,
And tastes where odours fail: facts that evince
Their forms diverse; and prove that seeds unlike
Rear the mixt mass diffus'd through all that lives.—

Mark but these fluent numbers; many a type
To many a term is common; but the terms,
The numbers cull'd, as diff'ring these from those,
From different types evolve: not so diverse
That the same type recurs not through the whole,
Or that, recurring, it recurs alone
From types too bounded; but from types alike

Sic aliis in rebus item conmunia multa,
Multarum rerum quom sint primordia, rerum
Dissimili tamen inter se consistere summâ
Possunt : ut merito ex aliis constare feratur
Humanum genus, et fruges, arbustaque læta.

Nec tamen omnimodis connecti posse putandum est
Omnia : nam volgo fieri portenta videres ;
Semiferas hominum species exsistere, et altos
Interdum ramos e gigni corpore vivo ;
Multaque connecti terrestria membra marinis :
Tum, flammam tetro spiranteis ore, Chimæras
Pascere naturam per terras omniparenteis :
Quorum nihil fieri manifestum est ; omnia quando,
Seminibus certis certâ genetrice creata,
Conservare genus crescentia posse videmus.
Scilicet id certâ fieri ratione necesse est :
Nam, sua quoique, cibis ex omnibus intus in artus
Corpora discedunt ; connexaque, convenienteis
Ecficiunt motus : at contra aliena videmus
Rejicere in terras naturam ; multaque cæcis
Corporibus fugiunt e corpore, percita plagis ;

Ver. 718. *And Nature's all-prolific womb propel,*
*With breath of fire, Chimæras ;*——] Hesiod, in the ſame manner, has described this imaginary monster :

Ἡ δε Χιμαιραν ετικτε, πνειουσαν αμαιμακετον πυρ.
Theog. l. 319.
Next, the Chimera rear'd she, breathing fire
Fierce and unquenchable.

Free to each term, yet ever new combin'd,
Flows the vast change, th' harmonious system flows.
Thus, through the world, the primal seeds of all,
To all things common, re-arrang'd diverse,
In myriad forms shoot forth; and herbs, and men,
And trees umbrageous own the same fixt source.
Yet not in endless modes combine the seeds
Of things at random; many a monster else
Would start tremendous, the fair frame of man
Sprout forth half-form'd, and trunks of trees have souls.
Shapes then would swarm half earthly, half marine,
And Nature's all-prolific womb propel,
With breath of fire, Chimæras; things the sight
Meets never, since from seeds, and pow'rs precise,
All spring to life, and thus preserve their kinds.
Thus all must spring, since all, from every food,
To every tribe adapted, strait digests;
And, blending with each limb, the train renews
Of acts appropriate; while th' ungenial mass
Meets earth unchang'd: or if, perchance, absorb'd,

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Thus also Virgil:

Hæc loca non tauri spirantes naribus ignem
Invertêre,——
Georg. ii. 140.

Bulls breathing fire her furrows ne'er have known.
Warton.

For a further account of this fabulous and romantic creature, see note on Book V. v. 921.

Quæ neque connecti quoquam potuere, neque inter
Vitaleis motus consentire, atque initari.
Sed, ne forte putes animalia sola teneri
Legibus hiis, quædam ratio disterminat omneis.
Nam, velutei totâ naturâ dissimiles sunt
Inter se genitæ res quæque, ita quomque necesse est
Dissimili constare figurâ principiorum :
Non, quo multa parum simili sint prædita formâ ;
Sed, quod non volgo paria omnibus omnia constent.
Semina quom porro distent, differre necesse est
Intervalla, vias, connexus, pondera, plagas,
Concursus, motus : quæ non animalia solum
Corpora sejungunt, sed terras ac mare totum
Secernunt, cœlumque a terris omne retentant.

Nunc age, dicta, meo dulci quæsita labore,

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Ver. 742. *But haste we, many a truth lies yet unsung*] He proceeds to the developement of another axiom of the Epicurean philosophy ; and having discussed the substances of bodies, he now advances to their qualities. He asserts, that the secondary qualities of all bodies, as colours, sounds, tastes, odours, and warmth, do not exist in the bodies themselves, but are only effects produced by the operation of those bodies upon the various organs of sense. This important discovery has been generally attributed to the researches of modern philosophy, in consequence of the long prevalence of the doctrines of the Peripatetic school over those of every other sect, prior to the triumphs of Des Cartes and Newton ; doctrines which spoke very abstrusely and unintelligibly upon secondary qualities in general ; but, at the same time, clearly affirmed, that at least the quality of colours inhered in the body that was coloured, and formed a constituent part of it. We shall find, however, by a further perusal of the theory and arguments of Lucretius, that modern philosophy, with respect to the qualities of bodies, has only revived an old and unjustly exploded hypothesis : and that Newton, Locke, and Boyle, have scarcely advanced an argument upon the subject that is not to be met with in the present poem.

The "Treatise on Colours," which is printed among the works of Aristotle, and is generally attributed to him, though its real author is uncertain, and is said by some critics, to have been Theo-

Flies off impalpable through pores extreme,
Void of all union, and for life unfit.
Nor deem each animated tribe alone
Such laws avows—all nature feels their force.
For since the diff'rence 'twixt created things
Is total, their primordial seeds in form
Must differ too: not that they ne'er commix
Of equal shape, but e'en when mixt that still,
From re-arrangement, the result is chang'd.
Nor only in their forms thus vary seeds
Primordial; but, alike, in weight, and pow'r,
In concourse, motion, intervening space,
And close connexion; changes that define,
Not men and brutes alone, but bound secure
From ocean earth, and earth from heav'n sublime.
But haste we, many a truth lies yet unsung

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phrastus, and by others, Strato of Lampsacus, is a valuable relic of ancient times, and gives us by much the fullest account of any book whatsoever, of the general philosophy of the Greeks upon this subject, and even proceeds so far as to develope their mechanical use of colours in the arts of dyeing and painting. It is more valuable on this latter account, indeed, than on the former; for, in the former, the confused and erroneous ideas of the Peripatetics are still indulged in all their incomprehensibility. M. Ameilhon, in his "Researches into the Colours of the Ancients, and the Arts which are connected with them," (See Memoires de l'Institut National, an iv. tom. i. Liter. et Beaux Arts,) does not appear to have been acquainted with the correct and elegant system of Epicurus upon the philosophy of colours: for, while he is altogether silent upon the writings of Lucretius, he gives the above-mentioned treatise all the eulogy to which it can possibly be entitled. "Ce traité annonce," says he, "un observateur profond, et il présente des vues veritablement philosophiques sur l'origine des couleurs, sur le passage d'une nuance à l'autre, sur la manière dont un peut, en unissant deux couleurs en creer, pour ainsi dire, une toisieme. J'ose meme avancer, que les modernes avoient peu ajouté à ces connoisances jusqu'au moment où le grand Newton est venu changer toutes nos idées sur cette matière, en nous revelant, à la faveur du prisme, le grand secret de la nature sur la composition de la lumiere, et sur la méchanisme des couleurs." If

Percipe: ne forte hæc albis ex alba rearis
Principiis esse, ante oculos quæ candida cernis;
Aut ea, quæ nigrant, nigro de semine nata:
Neve alium quem vis quæ sunt inbuta colorem,
Propterea gerere hunc credas, quod materiaï
Corpora consimili sint ejus tincta colore.
Nullus enim color est omnino materiaï
Corporibus, neque par rebus, neque denique dispar:
In quæ corpora si nullus tibi forte videtur
Posse animi injectus fieri, procul avius erras.
Nam, quom cæcigenei, solis quei numina numquam
Despexere, tamen cognoscant corpora tactu,
Ex ineunte ævo nullo conjuncta colore;
Scire licet, nostræ quoque menti corpora posse
Vorti in notitiam, nullo circumlita fuco.

---

M. Amelhon had studied the system of Epicurus, he would have known, that much of this great secret of nature on the composition of light, and the mechanism of colours, had been elucidated, and publicly taught by this accurate philosopher, although it does not appear that he had ever made use of a prism for the analysis of coloured light: an invention and application which exclusively appertain to Sir Isaac. In the modern doctrine, however, there are many doubtful points, and the late experiments of Dr. Herschell, upon radiant light and heat, will, perhaps, establish a new era in this elegant study.

In advancing in his own day, what is now the generally accredited hypothesis, Lucretius was opposed by the philosophers of every school but his own; for they all contended, that colours were essential ingredients of the coloured body; although they differed, in some degree, from each other in their modes of accounting for the productions of colour. The Stoics conceived that it was a property inherent in the elementary particles of matter; the Pythagoreans, that it formed an essential part of the surfaces of those particles when combined; and the Peripatetics, that it resulted from different intermixtures of their four elementary qualities, heat, cold, moisture, and dryness; while the Platonists maintained, that colours were nothing more than different combinations of light and darkness. Against all these Lucretius manfully enters his protest; and in a chain of rationation, which does honour to the human intellect, proves that colour is a real quality, and not a substance; an accident or event, as he has termed it in ver. 509, Book I., and not a conjunction: that its actual existence is in the light

Cull'd from my own lov'd labours. Deem not thou,
When aught of substance black or white the view
Solicits obvious,—deem not, in the germs
Of embryon matter, black or white inheres,
Or aught besides of tint, where aught occurs,
Rousing the vision; since the seeds of things
Live void of colours actual or conceiv'd.
This shouldst thou doubt, contending nought exists
Through the wide world but must evince some hue,
The doubt flows groundless. He, whose sightless orb
Ne'er drank the day enlighten'd, still perceives
Whate'er exists though tints elude his ken.
Hence not essential colours to the form
Of things created: frequent e'en ourselves,

---

itself;—and that all its variations and hues result from different reflections or refractions of the solar beam. Having fully established this truth by facts and arguments, which reach to verse 846, he next proceeds, in a more cursory manner, to observe, that bodies are equally devoid of all other secondary qualities, sound, smell, warmth, and moisture, as they are of colour: and that nothing actually attaches to them but their primary properties of solidity, figure, extent, number, motion, or rest. Throughout the whole of which, indeed, he is supported by the still existing creed of Epicurus, who thus expresses himself in his epistle to Herodotus: και μην, και τας ατόμους νομιστεον, μηδεμιαν ποιοτητα των φαινομενων προσφερεσθαι πλην σχηματος, και βαρους, και μεγεθους, και ὁσα εξ αναγκης σχηματος συμφυη εστι. Ποιοτητες γαρ αλλαι, οιον χρωμα τε, και θερμοτης, παρα την φυσιν των ατομων μεταβαλλουσιν, διο και ταις ατομοις εκ ενυπαρχουσι. "The particles of bodies are not to be conceived of as possessing any external qualities whatsoever, excepting form, weight, magnitude, and those which necessarily result from its peculiar configuration; for every other kind of quality, as *colour*, for example, and heat, entirely results from their different combinations, and consequently change as these change."

Ver. 756. —*frequent e'en ourselves,*
*Mid the deep shade of night, by touch alone*
*Prove what surrounds us, every hue extinct.*]
"Let us consider the red and white colours in porphyry: *hinder light but from striking on it*, and its colours vanish. It no longer produces any such ideas in us: upon the return of light it produces these appearances on us again. Can any one think any real

Denique, nos ipsei, cæcis quæquomque tenebris
Tangimus, haud ullo sentimus tincta colore.
Quod, quoniam vinco fieri, nunc esse docebo.
Omnis enim color omnino mutatur in omneis ;
Quod facere haud ullo debent primordia pacto :
Inmutabile enim quiddam superare necesse est,
Ne res ad nihilum redigantur funditus omnes.
Nam, quodquomque suis mutatum finibus exit,
Continuo hoc mors est illius, quod fuit ante.
Proinde, colore cave continguas semina rerum,

alterations are made in the porphyry by the presence or absence of light; and that those ideas of whiteness and redness are really in porphyry in the light, when it is plain *it has no colour in the dark?* It has, indeed, such a *configuration* of particles, both night and day, as are apt, by the rays of light rebounding from some parts of that hard stone, to produce in us the idea of redness, and from others, the idea of whiteness. But whiteness or redness are not in it at any time, but such a texture that hath the power to produce such a sensation in us." Locke on Hum. Unders. Book II. c. viii. Lucretius could not have expressed the doctrine he meaned to inculcate more pertinently; the instance of not perceiving coloured bodies in the dark is, perhaps, taken from himself; as most assuredly, is that passage of Virgil, in which he says:

——cœlum condidit umbrâ
Jupiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem.
Æn. vi. v. 271.

Jove o'er the heavens incumbent *shadows strews*,
And pitchy midnight robs the world *of hues*.

Ver. 759. *All hues, more'er, to all by turns convert;*] No assertion can be more strictly consonant with the discoveries of modern philosophy. Colours, according to the Newtonian theory, are of two kinds, *primary*, or *simple*, and *secondary* or *heterogenous*: the former consisting of all those produced by rays of light possessed of an equal degree of refrangibility, and an equal magnitude of their parts, as violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red: the latter, of all others compounded of the primary ones, or of a mixture of rays differently refrangible. But it is a curious fact, that even in the prismatic series of the seven original colours above enumerated, the middle colour of any three, in the order in which they occur, may be produced by a mixture of the two extremes: thus, a mixture of violet and blue gives us an indigo; indigo and green, a blue; blue and yellow, a green: and in this manner, each, as our poet observes, would convert to each, till the entire series was finished; when, if we were to pursue the experiment, it would again appear, that the last in the order, being red, combined with the second in the order, being indigo, would still produce the middle colour of the two, being, in this case, violet. It is probable, however, that Lucretius had his eye more immediately directed, in the present assertion, to colours refracted from the laminæ of shells and spars, or the plumes of pigeons and peacocks; where, from a cause that will shortly be explained, the sight is perpetually beholding a conversion of one colour into another. But the primal

Mid the deep shade of night, by touch alone
Prove what surrounds us, every hue extinct.
All hues, moreo'er, to all by turns convert;
A change primordial seeds can ne'er sustain;
Since something still through nature must exist
All change defying, lest th' ENTIRE survey'd
Fall into nought; for that which once admits
Mutation dies, its pristine pow'rs destroy'd.—
Tinge, then, with caution, the prime seeds of things,

atoms of matter, as he has before endeavoured to demonstrate, can suffer no change whatsoever: consequently, such mutations of colour could not possibly occur, if such primal atoms themselves were essentially coloured; for neither could red seeds become blue, nor orange, green; nor could a mixture of any two whatsoever, produce a third different in colour from the two so combined.

From this theory, moreover, and the production of any middle colour in the prismatic series, from its two extremes, we may be able to solve a question, which I do not know has been hitherto solved by any philosopher:—why is green so much more pleasant and reposing a colour to the eye than any other? The probable reason is, that from its forming the middle of the seven primary colours, it partakes more equably of the nature of all the rest than any individual colour besides can do.

This doctrine, however, of the existence of seven primary colours in solar light, has, by no means, been uniformly admitted on the continent. Father Castel appears to have been the first who attempted to reduce the seven colours to three: he contended, that the blue, yellow, and red, were competent to all the phænomena of optics; and that the whole compass of tints and shades of tints may be produced by a binary combination of those elements in different proportions. The theory of Castel was improved by Mayer, who formed an equilateral triangle, of which each side was divided into twelve parts; the whole, in this manner, containing ninety-one cells or square compartments, omitting the small triangular spaces left on the upper margins. The three extreme cells were blue, yellow, and red; and the intermediate cells marked the series of gradations; those on the sides, the double combination; and those of the interior, the triple combination, according to their respective distances from the apices. The celebrated Lambert remarked, that the effects were modified by the vivacity of the colouring materials; and that it was requisite to state previously whether those were to be apportioned by their bulk or their weight. M. Achard succeeded in writing an elaborate essay on the same theory: and finally, M. Burja has attempted to show, that though white should result from a mixture of these primary colours, it requires the blue and red to be joined to an excess of yellow. The binary compounds are best produced by a mixture of equal parts, by weight, of the elementary tints; and the process may be repeated with the results, so as to afford any number of intermediate shades; which again may be darkened at pleasure, by the addition of similar mixrures of black and white. Memoires de l'Académie Royale des Sciences. Berlin, 1792.

Ne tibi res redeant ad nihilum funditus omnes.
Præterea, si nulla coloris principiis est
Reddita natura, et variis sunt prædita formis,
E quibus omnigenos gignunt, variantque, colores;
Præterea, magni quod refert semina quæque
Cum quibus, et quali positurâ, contineantur,
Et quos inter se dent motus, adcipiantque;
Perfacile ex templo rationem reddere possis,
Quur ea, quæ nigro fuerint paullo ante colore,
Marmoreo fieri possunt candore repente:
Ut mare, quom magnei conmorunt æquora ventei,

Ver. 770. *Much, then, import th' arrangement, and the powers,*
*The kinds, connexions of primordial seeds,* &c.] It is the language of Mr. Locke, and expressed with his own precision. Without multiplying extracts from his invaluable Essay, compare the present passage of our poet with the latter half of the sentence quoted from it in the note on verse 754 of the present book: "It has indeed, such a configuration, &c."

Ver. 776. *Thus, when loud tempests tear the tortur'd main,*] This change of colour in the ocean is thus accurately remarked, as well as beautifully described, by Ovid:

Fluctibus erigitur, cœlumque æquare videtur
Pontus; et inductas aspergine tangere nubes.
Et modo, cum fulvas ex imo vertit arenas,
Concolor est illis; Stygia modo nigrior unda;
Sternitur interdum, spumisque sonantibus albet.
Metam. l. xi. v. 497.

Up mounts the main tow'rds heaven, with giddy surge
Lashing the clouds: now from the dread abyss
Sweeping the yellow sands, through every wave
Itself as yellow—blacker now than hell,
And now wide-whitening with resounding foam.

The poet, as well as the painter, is, therefore, left almost at liberty as to his choice of colour, when describing so variable a body as the ocean: and hence, with almost every colour has it been occasionally endowed. Ovid, in the above verses, has arrayed it in three diversities of hue,—black, white, and yellow; and every one remembers the green vestment which Shakspeare attributes to it in that fearful soliloquy of Macbeth:

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? no; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous sea incarnardine,
Making the *green* one red.

Nor is it in its liquid state alone that the sea thus changes in its hues: when converted into ice, the colours evinced are nearly as numerous and opposite. Thomson, therefore, and Ambrose Philips, are both equally true to Nature; though each pictures the icy mountains of the northern regions with a different tincture; the former telling us that

Thron'd in his palace of *cerulean* ice
Here Winter holds his unrejoicing court. Winter.

Lest, hence, thou ope the doors of death to all.
But though material atoms thus live void
Of hue; still many a diff'ring form is theirs,
Whence hues they gender, and their variance stamp.
Much, then, import th' arrangement, and the powers,
The kinds, connexions of primordial seeds,
Positions, impulse, and effects impell'd;
Since, hence, with ease the mind may, instant, trace
Why what is black this moment, should, the next,
Pour o'er the view with alabaster dye.
Thus, when loud tempests tear the tortur'd main,

---

While the latter asserts that

Here solid billows of enormous size
Alps of *green* ice in wild disorder rise.
Ep. to the Earl of Dorset.

So much, as Lucretius observes, a few verses above:

—imports th' arrangement and the powers,
The kinds, connexions of primordial seeds,
Positions, impulse, and effects impell'd.

Dr. Hutton seems to suppose, that the water of the sea, at a distance from the coasts, is generally of a dark blue, and that it becomes green as it approaches land, from an intermixture of yellowish mud; the natural blue and the adventitious yellow forming this colour. This, however, seems to be an unsatisfactory solution of the phænomenon, and one that will not universally apply. In quoting this gentleman's opinion, which I do from his translation of Ozanam's Recreations, I cannot avoid copying a most singular appearance of the sea-water, as to its assuming a variety of colours, which he himself witnessed in his passage from Europe to Guyana, in the year 1764, and which he thus relates:

"I do not recollect that we beheld the sea luminous till our arrival between the tropics; but at that period, and some weeks before we reached land, I almost constantly observed that the ship's wake was interspersed with a multitude of luminous sparks, and so much the brighter as the darkness was more perfect. The water round the rudder was, at length, entirely brilliant; and this light extended, gradually diminishing, along the whole wake. I remarked, also, that if any of the ropes were immersed in the water, they produced the same effect.

"But it was near land that this spectacle appeared in all its beauty. It blew a fresh gale, and the whole sea was covered with small waves, which broke, after having rolled for some time. When a wave broke, a flash of light was produced; so that the whole sea, as far as the eye could reach, seemed to be covered with fire, alternately kindled and extinguished. This fire, in the open sea, that is, at the distance of fifty or sixty leagues from the coasts of America, had a reddish cast. I have made this remark, because I do not know that any person ever examined the phænomena which I am about to describe.

"When we were in green water, the spectacle changed. The same fresh gale continued; but in the night-time, when steering an easy course between

Vortitur in canos candenti marmore fluctus.
Dicere enim possis nigrum, quod sæpe videmus,
Materies ubi permixta est illius, et ordo
Principiis mutatus, et addita demptaque quædam ;
Continuo id fieri ut candens videatur, et album.
Quod, si cæruleis constarent æquora ponti
Seminibus, nullo possent albescere pacto :
Nam, quoquomque modo perturbes, cærula quæ sint,
Numquam in marmoreum possint migrare colorem.
Sin alio atque alio sunt semina tincta colore,
Quæ maris ecficiunt unum purumque nitorem ;
Ut sæpe ex aliis formis, variisque figuris,
Ecficitur quiddam quadratum, unâque figurâ ;
Conveniebat, uti in quadrato cernimus esse
Dissimileis formas, ita cernere in æquore ponti,

---

the third and fourth degree of latitude, the fire above described assumed a form entirely white, and similar to the light of the moon, which at that time was not above the horizon. The upper part of the small waves, with which the whole surface of the sea was curled, seemed like a sheet of silver; while on the preceding evening it had resembled a sheet of reddish gold. I cannot express how much I was amused and interested by this spectacle.

" The following night it was still more beautiful; but at the same time more alarming, in consequence of the circumstances under which I then found myself. The ship had cast anchor at a considerable distance from the land, waiting for the new moon, in order to enter the harbour of Cayenne. Being anxious to get on shore, I stepped into the boat with several other passengers; but scarcely had we got a league from the ship, when we entered a part of the sea where there was a prodigious swell, as a pretty smart gale then prevailed at south-east. We soon beheld tremendous waves, rolling in our wake, and breaking over us. But what a noble spectacle, had we not been exposed to danger. Let the reader imagine to himself a sheet of silver, a quarter of a league in breadth, expanded in an instant, and shining with a vivid light. Such was the effect of these billows, two or three of which only reached us, before they broke. This was a fortunate circumstance, for they left the boat half filled with water, and one more, by rendering me a prey to the

The dashing surge is rob'd in dazzling white,
This mayst thou fathom hence, and prove precise
Why, oft though black, from combinations new
Of its primordial atoms, added these,
And those withdrawn, oft, too, the deep should wear
A vest contrasted, whit'ning to the day.
But were its primal atoms ting'd themselves
Black, or but blue, concussion ne'er could change
The fixt result; nor turn the black or blue
To the pure polish of the marble bust.
Nor urge from seeds of varying tints, perchance,
Springs, when combin'd, the main's resplendent face;
As in the cube mechanic many a shape
Diverse unites to rear its frame complete.
For as the keen sight in the cube surveys
Those varying figures, so the splendid deep,

---

sharks, would certainly have saved me from the trouble of new-modelling the work of the good M. Ozanam.

"There is scarcely a sea, in which the phænomenon of this light is not sometimes observed; but there are certain parts where it is much more luminous than in others. In general, it is more so in warm countries, and between the tropics, than any where else; it is remarkably luminous on the coasts of Guyana, in the environs of the Cape Verd Islands, near the Maldives and the coasts of Malabar, where, according to M. Godehen de Riville, it exhibits a spectacle very much like that above described.

"A phænomenon so surprising could not fail to excite the attention of philosophers; but till lately they confined themselves to vague explanations; they ascribed it to sulphur, to nitre, and other things, of which there is not a single atom in the sea, and they then imagined that they had reasoned well."

The causes assigned for these luminous appearances by the Doctor himself, are phosphoric matter, produced in the sea, which hence becomes luminous by agitation, and a vast multitude of luminous insects floating over its surface. Both these facts have been sufficiently ascertained; but something else seems still wanting to account for such curious phænomena.

Aut alio in quo vis uno puroque nitore,
Dissimileis longe inter se variosque colores.
Præterea, nihil obficiunt, obstantque, figuræ
Dissimiles, quo quadratum minus omne sit extra:
At variei rerum inpediunt prohibentque colores,
Quo minus esse uno possit res tota nitore.
Tum porro, quæ ducit et inlicit, ut tribuamus
Principiis rerum non numquam, caussa, colores,
Obcidit; ex albis quoniam non alba creantur,
Nec, quæ nigra cluent, de nigris; sed variis de.
Quippe et enim multo proclivius exorientur
Candida, de nullo, quam nigro, nata colore;
Aut alio quo vis, qui contra pugnet, et obstet.
Præterea, quoniam nequeunt sine luce colores
Esse, neque in lucem existunt primordia rerum;

Ver. 801. *Though, doubtless, white flows rather from the want*
*Of each existent tincture,——*] It does not appear that Lucretius himself was perfectly acquainted with the origin, either of the white or black hues of bodies: for he seems to imagine that these were produced in the precise manner of all other colours: nor was either of them satisfactorily accounted for till the time of Sir Isaac Newton, whose experiments upon this subject are clear and demonstrative. From these experiments it follows, that no ray, or even particle of light, is issued from the sun, or any other luminous body, unpossessed of some one of the primary colours enumerated in the note on ver. 754. The rays of light, or the particles of which those rays are composed, never are nor ever can be colourless, and by this mean produce a white hue: the phænomenon of white, resulting from a due intermixture of all the differently coloured rays which the sun, or any other luminous body transmits. As these are perpetually blended together in the atmosphere, the atmosphere and the light itself appear white, or colourless. But such white or colourless beams, whenever separated by a prism, or other refracting substance, into distinct rays, immediately evince themselves to be compound bodies, and disclose the seven colours of violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. This is a fact, which no man would be disposed to credit, if it were not too obvious to be disputed: so totally contrary is it to what reason could expect *à priori*, that such deep and full colours as blue, green, and red, should be necessary to the production of white. And yet there are modes of proving this, without analyzing the light itself. For

Or aught of equal lustre, would evince,
The varying tinctures whence that lustre flows.
The diff'ring forms, moreo'er, the cube contains
Mar not its unity, but diff'ring hues
A blended tinge create, by each divers'd.

A cause like this, too, all effect destroys:
Since white or black springs not from seeds so dy'd,
But seeds commixt of various dyes possest.
Though, doubtless, white flows rather from the want
Of each existent tincture, than from seeds
With black, in part, imbu'd, or aught besides
Of equal contrast, and as firm a foe.
And, since all colours live but in the light,
Were hues essential to the seeds of things

---

the phænomenon of white will be equally produced by a skilful mixture of seven different powders, each containing one of the seven prismatic colours enumerated above, and proportioned to each other, as the seven differently coloured rays are found to be proportioned in a beam of light; or a circular piece of card may be stained with distinct lines of the same different hues, in the order in which they occur when divided by a prism; and when swiftly twirled round by a pin driven through its centre, the eye, from the general intermixture of the colours that will necessarily ensue, will perceive the whole assemblage converted into a white. This white, however, will, in neither instance, be perfectly pure; for it is not easy to apportion the colours to each other with precision, nor can the colours themselves be supposed to possess the vivacity of the natural and essential hues of the solar rays. And hence the hue which is derived from these experiments, instead of being a pure and perfect white, will appear muddy, or as though intermixed with some portion of black. Bodies, therefore, which produce no alteration in a beam of light, when thrown upon them, but reflect all its colours equally, without absorbing any one, must inevitably appear white themselves: while those, on the contrary, that absorb the whole equally, and reflect no colour at all, must give the appearance of black; and thus, by destroying the light altogether, that impinges upon their own surface, must, as far as that surface extends, produce the effect of total darkness. The theory of Des Cartes on colours was not correct, but he appears to have been the first philosopher who rationally accounted for the origin of the white and black hues of bodies: and, in this respect, he has the advantage of Lucretius.

Scire licet, quam sint nullo velata colore.
Qualis enim cæcis poterit color esse tenebris,
Lumine qui in ipso mutatur, propterea quod,
Rectâ aut obliquâ percussus luce, refulget?
Pluma columbarum quo pacto in sole videtur, 800

---

Ver. 809. *Hues born of sun-beams,——*] Pindar is as correct in his philosophy, as he is elegant in his poetry, in the expression:

παμπορφορους ακτινας. Ode vi.

the *purple beams* of light.

Nor ought we to forget the appropriate and beautiful address of Cowley to Light, in his celebrated hymn on this subject:

All the world's bravery that delights our eyes,
Is but thy several liveries:
Thou the rich dye on them bestow'st.
Thy pencil paints this landscape as thou go'st.
A crimson garment in the rose thou wear'st,
A crown of studded gold thou bear'st.
The virgin lillies, in their white,
*Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked light.*

But nothing, either in Greek or Persian poetry, can surpass that very elegant figure of Gray's:

The *bloom* of young desire, and *purple light* of love.

In which he appears to have used the term purple, not in the modern and contracted sense of this expression, as confined to a single hue, but in the more extensive meaning with which it was applied by all ancient poets to every object highly beautiful and delicate, be its colour whatever it might. Whence Catullus applies it to the leaves of the oak: *quercus ramos purpureos*; and Albinovanus, even to the snow itself, *nivem purpureum.*

Whilst I am upon this subject, I cannot avoid noticing, that this much-admired verse of Gray's is not altogether so original as it is generally conceived to be. Tasso has the very same idea in his Jerusalem Delivered:

Gli empie d'onor la faccia, e vi riduce
*Di giovinezza il bel purpureo lume.*

Yet Tasso himself was not the inventor of it. For we thus trace it, verbatim, in Virgil, who applies it to Æneas, as Tasso does to Godfrey:

——*lumenque juventæ*
*Purpureum*, et lætos oculis afflârat honores.
L. i. 594.

The sprightly grace and *purple light of youth*
Beam'd from his eyes.

The term *purple*, in all these instances, refers obviously to its original and more extensive meaning of magnificent, superb, or beautiful. It is in this sense Milton himself appears to have used it, in a passage strikingly parallel:

Here love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and *waves his purple wings.*
Par. Lost.

Ver. 811. *Thus the gay pidgeon, as his plumes he waves,*
*Drinks in new tinctures from the noon-tide blaze:*]

So the truly classical Gray, in his "Bard:"

——and, soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of heaven her many-colour'd wings.

The whole description is thus beautifully and closely copied by Tasso:

Cosi piuma talor, che di gentile
Amorosa *colomba il collo cinge,*
Mai non si scorge a se stessa simile;
Ma in *diversi colori al sol si tinge.*
*Or d'accesi rubin* sembra un monile:
Or *di verdi smeraldi il lume finge:*
Or insieme gli mesce: e varia, e vaga,
In cento modi, i rignardanti appaga.
Gerus. Cant. xv. 5.

These, too, would die in darkness: for, resolve,
What hues exist beneath the midnight gloom?
Hues born of sun-beams, changing but their shades
As, playful, changes the refracted ray? 810
Thus the gay pidgeon, as his plumes he waves,

---

Mr. Hoole's version of this passage is elegant, but so general as to lose all sight of the original; and the reader must, therefore, accept of the following:

Such, oft, the lovely colours that bedeck,
Amidst his am'rous sport, the pidgeon's neck.
No constant hue it keeps, but ever plays,
With tints diverse, beneath the solar rays.
Now all the ruby in rich necklace glows;
Now its own light the verdant emerald throws;
Now close they blend, and vague, and various still,
The gazer's eye with countless beauties fill.

The beautiful multiplicity of colours which are thus produced, and perpetually variegated, results from the resemblance of the filaments of the plumes to prisms; and the nearer this resemblance can be traced, both with respect to shape and transparency, the more numerous will be the colours refracted, and the greater their vivacity and richness.

With respect to the colours of precious stones, it is a fact, now fairly decided in chemistry, that all of them depend upon a solution of some peculiar metal in some peculiar acid: and that, of the various metals, iron is more frequently employed by nature than any other. But the immediate substance, or preparation of iron, by which the ruby and the emerald acquire their appropriate hues, is altogether a modern discovery, and was, I believe, first detected by M. Vauquelin, in his analysis of the aigue marine, or beryl. The investigation unfolded to him a new earth, which is the basis, both of this jewel, and, as he afterwards ascertained, of the emerald and ruby. This new earth bears a considerable resemblance to alumine, but, nevertheless, differs from it in several radical properties: from the sweetness of its taste the French chemist assigned it the name of Glycine. When to this terrene basis is added some portion of that peculiar preparation of iron which is denominated the oxyd of chrome, and which bears a great resemblance to lime, the beryl, the emerald, and the ruby become the produce of the combination: and the colour or specific gem depends upon the degree of oxydation this chamæleon-like metal has sustained; when highly oxydated, producing a red tincture, and a green when the oxydation is but small. For a farther account of this process, see the French Annales de Chymie, vol. xxv.

The admirable picture before us, of the changeful colours in the plumes of the peacock, cannot but remind us of Thomson's equally excellent description of the opal:

——all combin'd
Thick through the whitening opal play thy beams;
Or, flying several from the surface, form
A trembling variance of revolving hues
As the site varies in the gazer's hand.

Every one is acquainted with the very correct and exquisite delineation of the pheasant in Pope's Windsor Forest; which was translated into French verse no later ago than 1798, with considerable accuracy and spirit, by M. Viel de Boisjolin. If we compare it with our own poet's description of the pidgeon, there is a resemblance which may justly induce us to suspect that Pope himself had Lucretius in his recollection at the time of composing it:

See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,
And mounts, exulting, on triumphant wings:
Short is his joy; he feels the fiery wound,
Flutters in blood, and, panting, beats the ground.
Ah! what avails *his glossy varying* dyes,
His *purple crest*, and *scarlet-circled* eyes.

Quæ sita cervices circum collumque coronat.
Namque aliâ fit, utei claro sit rubra pyropo;
Interdum quodam sensu fit, utei videatur
Inter curalium virideis miscere smaragdos.
Caudaque pavonis, largâ quom luce repleta est,
Consimili mutat ratione obvorsa colores:
Quei quoniam quodam gignuntur luminis ictu,
Scire licet, sine eo fieri non posse putandum.
Et, quoniam plagæ quoddam genus excipit in se

---

The vivid *green* his shining *plumes* unfold,
His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold.

Without wandering from the subject, the reader may, with this, compare the following description of Mr. Mason:

——supreme in glittering state
The peacock spreads his rain-bow train, with eyes
Of sapphire bright, irradiate each with gold:
Meanwhile, from every spray, the ring-doves coo.
English Garden.

These admirable verses cannot but remind the Portuguese reader of a similar description of Camoens, in his Lusiad:

Olha de Banda as Ilhas, que se esmaltão
Da varia cor que pinta o roxo fruto
As aves variadas que ali saltão
Da verde noz tomando seu tributo.

Here Banda's isles their fair embroid'ry spread
Of various fruitage, azure, white, and red;
And birds of every beauteous plume display
Their glitt'ring radiance, as from spray to spray,
From bower to bower on busy wings they rove,
To seize the tribute of the spicy grove.
Mickle.

There is a bold and energetic illustration of this same phænomenon, of the intermixture and conversion of the solar hues, in Mr. Cumberland's Calvary, derived from a very different quarter; and which I shall introduce by way of contrast. Satan is represented as having received the annunciation of his final doom from our Saviour; his whole figure is immediately changed; and even the attendant demon Mammon,

——in ghastly silence stood,
Gazing with horror on his chieftain's face,
*That clang'd all hues by fits*; as when the north,
With nitrous vapours charg'd, convulsive shoots
Its fiery darts athwart the trembling pole,
Making heaven's vault a canopy of blood.
So, o'er the visage of th' exorcis'd fiend
*Alternate gleams, like meteors, came and went.*

Ver. 819. *And as 'the stimulus the sight that strikes*] In the note on ver. 740 I have already enumerated the opinions of the principal sects of Grecian philosophers, as to the origin of colours; and have stated the resemblance which the theory of Epicurus bears to that of Sir Isaac Newton, and which is now almost uniformly adopted by philosophers in every European nation. It is not, however, in the *origin* or cause of colours alone that these two sages concur, but also in the mode by which the sight becomes sensible of them. It was an axiom, first advanced by Epicurus, and since nearly universally acquiesced in, that bodies can only operate upon each other by contact, or an approach so near as to answer the purpose of contact: but the coloured substances we behold, so far from touching our eyes,

Drinks in new tinctures from the noon-tide blaze:
Now glows the ruby, and now, ting'd with blue,
Sports the green emerald o'er his glossy neck.
Thus, too, the peacock, as direct, or bent
Falls the full beam, wears each prismatic dye.
Since, then, th' impinging light each hue creates,
So, without light, each, instant, must expire.
And as the stimulus the sight that strikes

---

are generally at a considerable distance from them. Epicurus, therefore, conceived, that to produce in the sight the sensation of colour, minute elementary particles, infinitesimal as the corpuscles of light, were perpetually thrown off from the coloured substance, which, impinging upon the retina, became a stimulus to the sensation that immediately succeeded, whether it were a sensation of violet, green, or any other colour. When Des Cartes established his system of a plenum upon the ruins of that of Aristotle, he approved, in some measure, of this Epicurean principle of contact, but contended, as I have before observed, and especially in the note on ver. 166 of the present book, that there was no such thing as a transmission of minute and viewless particles from one body hereby operating upon another; maintaining, instead of such a doctrine, that where two substances at a distance acted upon each other, it was in consequence of a vibratory motion extended through the elastic medium of the atmosphere, excited by the acting substance, and hereby affecting the substance acted upon. This was his general theory; and hence he applied it to the subject now under our consideration. Denying, as he did, the transmission of extreme particles from a coloured body to the retina of the eye, he maintained, that the sensation and idea of colours arose from a peculiar vibratory motion excited in the atmosphere by bodies of peculiar colours, and communicated, in consequence, to the retina. Newton, however, who adopted the theory of Epicurus, respecting the materiality of light, and the perpetual emission of its particles from the sun, extended, along with Epicurus, this same theory to the solution of the sensation of colours as well.

Mr. Locke is also full upon the same hypothesis, to which he most cordially assented: and as it is impossible to give a clearer explanation of the meaning of Lucretius in the present instance, and more especially as it will serve to elucidate many succeeding phænomena to which he adverts, I shall take the liberty of transcribing from this most accurate philosopher, the following passage. He has just been speaking of the qualities of bodies, which, like Lucretius, he denies to exist in the bodies themselves:

"The next thing to be considered is, how bodies produce ideas in us: and that is *manifestly by impulse*, the only way we can conceive bodies to operate in.

"If then, external objects be not united to our minds when they produce ideas in it, and yet we perceive these original qualities in such of them as singly fall under our senses, it is evident, that some motion must be thence continued by our nerves, or animal spirits, by some parts of our bodies, to the brain, or the seat of sensation; there to produce in our minds the particular ideas we have of them. And since the extension, figure, number, and mo-

Pupula, quom sentire colorem dicitur album ;
Atque aliud porro, nigrum quom, et cætera, sentit ;
Nec refert, ea, quæ tangis, quo forte colore
Prædita sunt, verum quali magis apta figurâ ;
Scire licet, nihil principiis opus esse colores,
Sed variis formis varianteis edere tactus.

Præterea, quoniam non certis certa figuris
Est natura coloris, et omnia principiorum
Formamenta queunt in quo vis esse nitore :
Quur ea, quæ constant ex illis, non pariter sunt
Omnigenis perfusa coloribus in genere omni ?
Conveniebat enim corvos quoque sæpe volanteis
Ex albis album pennis jactare colorem ;
Et nigros fieri nigro de semine cycnos,
Aut alio quo vis uno, varioque, colore.

Quin etiam, quanto in parteis res quæque minutas
Distrahitur magis, hoc magis est, ut cernere possis
Evanescere paullatim, stinguique, colorem :
Ut fit, ubi in parvas parteis discerpitur aurum,

---

tion of bodies of an observable bigness, *may be perceived at a distance* by the sight, it is evident, *some singly imperceptible bodies must come from them to the eyes*, and thereby convey to the brain some motion which produces these ideas, which we have of them in us.

" After the same manner that the ideas of these original qualities are produced in us, we may conceive, that the ideas of secondary qualities are also produced, viz. *by the operation of insensible particles on our senses*. For it being manifest that there are bodies, and good store of bodies, each whereof is so small that we cannot, by any of our senses, discover either their bulk, figure, or motion, as is evident in the particles of the air and water, and others extremely smaller than those, perhaps as much smaller than the particles of air or water, as the particles of air or water are smaller than peas or hail-stones : let us suppose at present, that the different motions and figures, bulk and number, of such particles affecting

Varies, from things that varying dyes educe,
Black, white, or aught besides, and nought imports,
Change how it may, th' existing hue, but sole
The diff'rent figures whence those hues are rear'd:
Hence useless colours to the seeds of things,
From varying forms by varying frictions rous'd.

Since, too, no seeds defin'd with tints are stain'd
Defin'd alike, and every shape concurs
In all that springs, whate'er the hue evinc'd,
Whence flows it, then, that every class alike
Reflects not every tincture?—whence that crows
Robe not in white from seeds that white create?
Or that the downy swan, in black array'd,
Or hues as hideous, ne'er the sight appals?

As things, moreo'er, to parts minute divide,
Th' anterior tincture fades. Thus fades away,
To dust impalpable reduc'd, the dye
Of gold refulgent: thus the Tyrian woof,

---

the several organs of our senses, produce in us those different sensations which we have from the *colours and smells of bodies*, e. g. that a violet, by the impulse of such insensible particles of matter of peculiar figures and bulks, and in different degrees and modifications of their motions, causes the ideas of the blue colour, and sweet scent of that flower, to be produced in our minds, &c."

It is obvious, that this hypothesis of Locke is a part of the very system of Epicurus and Lucretius; and was employed by them, as will soon appear more at large, in the solution of all sensations and ideas whatsoever. This system, moreover, when minutely examined, tends, in no inconsiderable degree, to explain the Berkleian dogma, that the image of an object in the eye is altogether different from the object itself. But, for a more explicit account and examination of this latter doctrine, and its deductions, I must refer the reader to various notes on Book IV. of this poem.

Purpura, pœniceusque color clarissimus multo,
Filatim quom distractus est, disperditur omnis :
Noscere ut hinc possis, prius omnem ecflare colorem
Particulas, quam discedant ad semina rerum.
Postremo, quoniam non omnia corpora vocem
Mittere concedis, neque odorem ; propterea fit,
Ut non omnibus adtribuas sonitus, et odores :
Sic, oculis quoniam non omnia cernere quimus,
Scire licet, quædam tam constare orba colore,
Quam sine odore ullo quædam, sonituque remota :
Nec minus hæc animum cognoscere posse sagacem,
Quam quæ sunt aliis rebus privata notarum.
Sed, ne forte putes, solo spoliata colore
Corpora prima manere ; etiam secreta teporis
Sunt, ac frigoris omnino, calidique vaporis ;
Et sonitu sterila, et suco jejuna, feruntur ;
Nec jaciunt ullum proprium de corpore odorem.
Sic ut amaracini blandum stactæque liquorem,
Et nardi florem, nectar qui naribus halat,
Quom facere instituas ; cum primis quærere par est,

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Ver. 849. *Nor deem primordial seeds devoid alone*
*Of hues prismatic. Heat and cold severe*, &c.] Having incontestibly proved, that colours do not inhere in the substances which excite the various images and sensations of colours, our poet now proceeds cursorily to notice, that all other secondary qualities are as remote from the bodies to which they apparently appertain, as the quality of colours. See note on ver. 740 of the present book.

Ver. 855. *Drawn from the fragrant nard, the dulcet powers*
*Of marjoram, and myrrh*,——] Thus translated by De Coutures : Lorsque vous voulez faire une

Fritter'd to threads, its purple pride foregoes;
Hence proving clear that hues from things concrete
Evanish total ere to seeds dissolv'd.

From many a substance sound, or odour fine
Flies never; nor the race of man bestows
Odours, or sounds on all things. Judge then, hence
That, since not all things the keen sight discerns,
Full many a substance, too, as void exists
Of varying hues, as these of scent, or sound:
Things, than which nought the mind more clear perceives,
Whate'er the powers possest of, or denied.
Nor deem primordial seeds devoid alone
Of hues prismatic. Heat, and cold severe,
Moisture, and sound, these, too, they never know;
Nor aught of fluent odours, to the sense
Hateful or sweet. Thus when, to please the fair,
Some rich perfume the skilful artist plans,
Drawn from the fragrant nard, the dulcet powers
Of marjoram, and myrrh, with studious heed

composition de marjolaine, de myrrhe, et de nard, *et que vous y melez la douceur de jasmin.* This *essence of jasmine*, I apprehend, was a favourite perfume of the baron's; at least, I can guess no other reason why he should have introduced it into his version; for, most assuredly, not the remotest allusion to the *jasmine*, or to any other than the three odoriferous shrubs enumerated antecedently to it, are to be met with in Lucretius. Much doubt has been entertained by critics respecting the species of nard which was in repute among the ancients as an elegant perfume, and which is generally described under the character of Nardos Gapanica, or nard from an Indian province named Gapana. Our all-accomplished coun-

Quoad licet, ac possis reperire, inolentis olivi
Naturam, nullam quæ mittat naribus auram :
Quam minume ut possit mixtos in corpore odores,
Concoctosque, suo contactos perdere viro.
Propterea, eâdem debent primordia rerum
Non adhibere suum gignundis rebus odorem,
Nec sonitum ; quoniam nihil ab se mittere possunt
Nec simili ratione saporem denique quemquam,
Nec frigus, neque item calidum tepidumque vaporem.
Cætera, quæ quom ita sunt tamen, ut mortalia constent,
Molli lenta, fragosa putri, cava corpore raro,
Omnia sint a principiis sejuncta, necesse est ;
Inmortalia si volumus subjungere rebus
Fundamenta, quibus nitatur summa salutis :
Ne tibi res redeant ad nihilum funditus omnes.

Nunc ea, quæ sentire videmus quomque, necesse est,
Ex insensilibus tamen omnia confiteare
Principiis constare : neque id manifesta refutant,

---

tryman Sir W. Jones has developed this plant to the conviction, as I believe, of every one who will give himself the trouble to follow him in his very accurate investigation inserted in the Asiatic Researches, and which he thus describes in the Linnéan style : Valeriana Jatamansi floribus triandris foliis cordatis quaternis, radicalibus petiolatis. The Jatamansi of the Hindus is also plentifully to be met with in Arabia, and by the inhabitants of this latter country is denominated Sumbul. As to the myrrh and marjoram, they still occasionally preserve a place among the perfumes of the present day. The liquid myrrh of Lucretius, *stactæ liquor*, is the resinous gum of an Arabian tree, in its thorns and general appearance very much resembling our Acacia vera. The marjoram or Amaracinus of our poet is the Origanum of

From the pure olive first a juice he seeks
Void of all scent, for nature such prepares,
Lest, with th' effluvia thus selected choice,
Aught else combine, and mar th' harmonious whole.
Thus void of scent primordial seeds must spring,
Thus void of sound; and hence nor scent, nor sound,
Can give to things created: for themselves
Nought can transmit but what themselves possess.
And hence, moreo'er, the powers of heat, or cold,
Vapour, or taste, these never can bestow,
Nor aught alike destructive, aught survey'd,
Viscous, unfirm, or fragile; aught educ'd
From bodies soft, putrescent, or relax'd;
These thou must sever from primordial seeds
If things created on a base be built
Immortal, whence the world's vast fabric lives,
And nought to nought can waste with utter death.
This full premis'd, now, Memmius, mark what flows;
That all the sentient forms the sight surveys,
Whate'er their powers, from senseless atoms spring.

---

the Swedish botanist, and denominated Amaracinus or Amaracus, from the name of a young man who first brought its odour into repute; or rather, perhaps, from a composition in which the essence of origanum was the chief ingredient.

Ver. 874. *This full premis'd, now,* Memmius, *mark what flows;*
*That all the sentient forms the sight surveys,*
*Whate'er their powers, from senseless atoms spring.*] The poet proceeds to open another, and a most important dogma of the Epicurean system; the production of perception and thought from impercipient and incogitative matter: and hereby to prove that the entire system of all animals whatever, soul, mind, or spirit, as well as body, is a

Nec contra pugnant, in promptu cognita quæ sunt ;
Sed magis ipsa manu ducunt, et credere cogunt,

mere combination of material atoms, but of atoms organized in a peculiar mode : and that the whole is, hence, equally perishable, and must equally dissolve at death. The former part of the proposition alone, the creation of perception and sense from impercipient atoms, is discussed in the remainder of the present book ; the latter part, or the mortality of the percipient principle, together with a variety of moral and philosophic deductions, unrivalled in their beauty and sublimity, form the basis of the ensuing.

In advancing this proposition, our poet had to contend equally against the popular creed, and the systems of other philosophers ; but with a consistency which, I think, must be allowed him, even by those who differ from him in opinion, he follows up his principles through every legitimate avenue, and developes a chain of reasoning from vital facts and experiments, which has been seldom equalled by any philosopher upon the same subject since, and, as far as I am acquainted, surpassed by no one. From the Christian scriptures, indeed, those oracles of divine and unerring reason, we are clearly taught, in my apprehension, not only that there will be a resurrection of the body, properly so called, but that the soul does not perish with the body at death ; surviving its ruins, and being admitted, if virtuous, to a state of separate felicity. In this respect, therefore, the result of our poet's argument is erroneous : but, so far as it relates to the common origin of the whole man, to the materiality of the soul itself, it appears to me altogether unanswerable, and by no means contradictory to revelation. To render the soul immortal, why is it necessary that it should be immaterial ? If, at the resurrection, the body at large will itself become immortal, why may not that portion, or arrangement of it, which is the source of thought, be immortal from its birth ? Or why should it be supposed more difficult for thought to originate from matter, than gravitation, or any other property which it unequivocally possesses ? In every instance in which the soul is represented in the Scriptures to have appeared after death, it has appeared in a material form ; —nor could it, indeed, have been otherwise the subject of material vision,—impalpably attenuated and refined, but still material, and capable of identification ; freed from the laws of gravity, and able to permeate the pores of grosser substances. There is an insuperable difficulty that attaches to the doctrine of two distinct substances united in the human frame, of powers and qualities in every respect adverse to, and inconsistent with, each other, and possest of no common medium of action ; and the war between Materialists and Immaterialists, as hitherto conducted, can never terminate. Admit that matter is competent to the whole ; that, in a certain arrangement or modification, it can think ; that, in the same state it becomes attenuated, etherial, or spiritualized ; that such a modification of it is immortal from its first developement, and every difficulty appears to vanish : a point of union is discoverable for antagonists, who seemed to be incapable of conciliation, and the sublime doctrines of revelation become coincident with human reason.

The grand motive for superadding an immaterial principle to living animals, is, because it is conceived that mere matter can never possess the power of sensation or thought. But why can it not possess such a power ? Unquestionably, it cannot, in its state of utmost decomposition and simplicity : for, thus reduced, there is scarcely a power of any kind it can possess at all. But whoever minutely attends to the progressive chain of powers it acquires by progressive arrangements and organizations, from the simple possession of gravitation to that of chemical affinities, and fibrous irritability, must, I think, be led eventually to admit that it may ultimately prove the source of perception and thought, as well as of such other qualities. Mr. Locke declared openly, that he saw no impossibility in the production of thought from a solid substance, and conceived, (Book II. chap. 23 of his Essay,) that " created spirits are not totally separate from matter." It is hence triumphantly said, that Mr. Locke himself ought, even upon his own principles, to have been a Materialist. For, to suppose the em-

This every fact of every day, if scann'd,
Far from resisting, proves a truth most firm;

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ployment of two or more substances, where one is amply sufficient, is altogether unphilosophic, and inconsistent with the simplicity of nature.

I have said that matter, in its utmost state of decomposition and individuality, is divested of all power whatsoever. The simplest and the most general power of which we find it possest, is that of gravitation. But a monad or individual atom of primitive matter, if placed alone in the immensity of space, could not possess even the property of gravitation: for gravitation implies the existence of two or more particles mutually attracting each other: and Newton has justly ridiculed the idea of innate attraction as an absurdity. Matter, in all its compound forms, necessarily therefore evinces the property of gravitation: it must, however, be in a compound state, or even this simplest and most general of all properties could not be evinced. But the modes in which the different particles of matter combine, may be varied almost to infinity: and a different power must of necessity be educed by every variation that occurs. Modified in one way, matter evinces the power of magnetism; in another way, that of electricity; in a third, that of chemical affinities; and in a fourth, that of vegetable or fibrous irritability; till, at length, it acquire the strong stimulative perfection of the mimosa pudica, or the dionæa muscipula; and will either shrink from the touch of the intruding insect, or contract its fibres, and kill it by a clench. When then we ascend thus high, in what should seem to be the natural scale of sensation, it is attended, I think, with no great difficulty, to suppose, that animal as well as vegetable irritability is the result of a peculiar organization of simple and unirritable material corpuscles.

But let us examine, in a few words, the first origin of animals, and their mode of acquiring existence. In what does it differ from that of the vegetable world? The most severe scrutiny of man can trace no kind of irritability in the seeds of any description of plants. There is a peculiar organization, but no species of feeling or irritability whatever—not even in those of the plants I have just before made mention of, the mimosa, or the dionæa muscipula, or even the hedysarum movens, which exhibits a perpetual motion in the sun-shine. But these seeds are entrusted to the earth: by the action of the earth their filaments are either evolved or augmented; a new state of organization, a new modification of matter is produced, and a new property, that of irritability, is created. In the same manner, the new-lain fecundated egg of an oviparous animal has no more of either irritability or sensation than the seed of a plant. It consists merely of matter in a peculiar, but certainly an insensate, state of organization. What then is superadded to it to produce the perception it is shortly destined to possess? The mother broods over it for a certain period of time; but the mother communicates nothing but heat, which is itself a material substance: for a common oven, judiciously warmed, will hatch the inclosed chick just as soon, and as safely. A change, therefore, is produced in a given time by the application of a definite quantity of heat, or of matter differently arranged in the organization of the interior substance of the egg, in the same manner as in that of the vegetable seed; and from a new modification of its matter is produced a new and superior property: the fetus becomes gradually endowed with the power of sensation.

It is precisely the same thing in man. When the embryon descends from the ovarium into the uterus, upon one system of physiology, or when the seminal fluids of the male and female unite in the uterus, and form the first filaments of the fetus, upon another system, it is obviously at this time devoid of all sensation whatever. The placenta supplies it with oxygen, the liquor of the uterus, perhaps, with nutriment, though this is uncertain; yet no research whatever can trace any thing added to it, but different material substances. In process of time, however, a new organization is gradually produced; for the first ovum, or embryon filaments, no more resembles the future fetus, than the seed or the egg resembles the future plant or bird; and, with the production of

Ex insensilibus, quod dico, animalia gigni.
Quippe videre licet, vivos exsistere vermeis 870

a new organization, we trace the production of a new power, that I mean of sensation. From sensation, we afterwards discover the origin of ideas and thought. There is an admirable simplicity in the laws and operations of nature. It is the grand characteristic of creation: and we are sure to err in our reasoning, when we pre-suppose a greater complexity in the cause, than is necessary to produce a definite effect. I do not here follow up the vague opinions of Dr. Darwin, with respect to vegetable life, and vegetable sensations; because, if they be not founded upon fancy alone, there is too little ground for admitting them as philosophic truths. Those, however, who are acquainted with his Botanic Garden and Temple of Nature, but more especially with his Phytologia, well know that he contends, not only for the existence of a corporeal structure in vegetables, consisting of arteries, veins, lymphatics, muscles, umbilical vessels, sexual and respiratory organs, but also for that of nerves, and a common sensorium or brain; and the senses of love and hatred, pleasure, pain, and sleep. See chapter viii. of this last entertaining publication. Yet, the doctor himself has been in some degree exceeded by M. Patrin, who equally contends for a similar kind of sensation, if not of structure, in the mineral world; and conceives, from their assimilations and *elective* attractions, that minerals are as much organized in their own way, as any vegetables whatever; from the stone which we call brute, because we perceive not the relations which connect it with the rock from which it was separated, to the beautiful *mineral vegetation* denominated *flos ferri*, which so much resembles marine productions, and appears to be one of the intermediate links which nature has placed on the confines of her different kingdoms, to connect them with each other. See Nouveau Dictionnaire et Hist. Naturelle appliquée aux Arts, tom. xiv.

From these observations it should seem then that gravitation, chemical affinities, irritability, sensation, thought, all equally and progressively flow from various modifications of matter, and from matter alone. Nature indeed appears to show, and Lucretius, who is the poet of nature, undertakes to affirm, that no modifications of matter can continue for ever, and consequently that at death the dissolution must be entire; and the thinking principle of man, the *material spirit* which animates him, as necessarily perish as any other part of his frame. But the glorious revelation which "has brought *life* and *immortality*," the knowledge of *the soul*, and of *a future resurrection* "to light," teaches us, in a voice "which cannot lie," that matter may and will continue for ever uncorrupted and in an organized form: it establishes the triumphant belief, that the body at large shall hereafter arise from its grave, to the inheritance of eternal life; and that that part of it which constitutes the soul is immortal from its very birth. For a continuation of this subject, see note on Book III. v. 100.

Ver. 880. *Thus into life th' insensate dunghill rears*
*The race of worms,*] So Darwin:

Hence, without parent, by spontaneous birth
Rise the first specks of animated earth;
From nature's womb the plant or insect swims,
And buds or breathes, with microscopic limbs.
Templ. of Nat. i. 247.

Nor widely different Thomson:

Full nature swarms with life: *one wondrous mass*
*Of animals or atoms organiz'd*
*Waiting the vital breath*, when Parent Heaven
Shall bid his spirit blow. Summer, 287.

The two English as well as the Latin poet obviously inclined to the doctrine of equivocal or spontaneous generation; the production of animals from the heat of the sun, or other adventitious stimuli, acting upon a proper nidus, without the express copulation of male and female: and it is wonderful to observe the necessity zoologists have felt themselves under of late years, to return in some measure to the doctrine advanced in the text. The creed is generally conceived to have been of Egyptian birth; and was in universal vogue among all the philosophic schools of Greece and Rome. It followed, however, as a natural

That sentient things, things void of sense create.
Thus into life th' insensate dung-hill rears 880

consequence from the first principles of Democritus and Epicurus, and all those who, denying the immediate superintendence of a Divinity in the formation of the world, traced the production of all things, animals as well as vegetables, from certain apparently anomalous organizations of matter alone. The popular creed and the mythology of the poets coincided in the same hypothesis. When Ovid, therefore, who has copied from Hesiod his account of the antediluvian ages of the world, relates at length the destruction of every species of animals by the deluge, with the single exception of Deucalion and Pyrrha; he supposes the whole human race regenerated; and this, in obedience to the command of the oracle consulted on the occasion, not from coition of the surviving pair, but from casting the stones of the earth backwards over their shoulders, which suddenly softened and became possest of human features: for, observes he,

Magna parens terra est: lapides in corpore terræ
Ossa reor dici. METAM. l. i.

Our mighty mother is the earth; the stones
Upon her surface doubtless are her bones.

In this fact, however, we trace at least the co-operation of man and woman, in the re-production of the human race. But nothing of the kind occurred, according to the same tradition, in the renewal of every other species of animals. For the poet shortly proceeds to inform us that,

Cætera diversis tellus animalia formis
*Sponte sua peperit*; postquam vetus humor ab igne
Percaluit solis; cœnumque, udæque paludes
Intumuêre æstu; fæcundaque semina rerum
Vivaci nutrita solo, ceu matris in alvo,
Creverunt, faciemque aliquam cepêre morando.
ID.

All other tribes, howe'er diverse of make,
Earth bore *spontaneous*; and as down direct,
Th' establish'd sun his radiant ether threw,
And the foul slime, the stagnant marsh below
Swell'd with his fire, the genial seeds of things
New bulk assum'd, new forms of life display'd.

Such was the opinion of the people, and such that of almost every school of philosophy. Aristotle, among naturalists in general, strenuously contended for this power of spontaneous generation; and having had the good fortune to become more popular throughout every European state, after the dissemination of the Christian religion, than any other philosopher, this doctrine likewise descended with his general code of tenets, till about a century ago the whole fabric sustained a severe assault from the united labours of Des Cartes, Bayle, Malbranche, and Newton, who maintained, that all animal life must necessarily be propagated by sexual commerce alone; and be continued either viviparously or oviparously.

But by experiments and observations which have since been made, and that with the most undeviating attention, it should seem that these are not the only means by which animal life is generated: that sexual commerce is by no means absolutely necessary in every instance, and that succeeding races are propagated in modes altogether as numerous and as diverse as in the vegetable world. The resemblance in this respect, between the two departments, is indeed most striking and astonishing; and it is equally certain in both cases, that although sexual intercourse, and oviparous and viviparous gestation, the medium I mean of seeds and bulbs or buds in the vegetable kingdom, and eggs and living fetuses in the animal, are generally employed by nature for this purpose, yet in each department there are also other modes of propagation, by no means unfrequently adopted. The armed polypus or hydra of Linneus multiplies its species, like the water-lentil, by sending off lateral shoots from the body of the parent reptile. The bell-polypus or hydra stentora increases by splitting longitudinally; and these divisions, and every succeeding race of divisons, continue to re-split every twenty-four hours, till the original stock in a few days produces an innumerable offspring. The funnel-shaped polypus

Stercore de tetro, putorem quom sibi nacta est,
Intempestivis ex imbribus humida, tellus.

multiplies by splitting transversely; and every species of it, as well as many other animals of the order Gymnarthridia, as the asterias and hirudo viridis, may be propagated by sections, with as much ease as the most simple plant whatever; and these sections may be perpetually renewed without the failure of an individual part. The dart millepes affords increase by a spontaneous separation, about two-thirds below the head, into two distinct and perfect animals; and we know of no other mode by which it can continue its species. The animalcules found in infusions of animal and vegetable substances, and indeed, all microscopic animalcules, multiply by continued divisions and subdivisions, something in the same manner; and various minute experiments of Saussure sufficiently prove, that sexual copulation, even if a difference of gender subsist among them, which has never been traced, and in all probability does not subsist, has no effect in the present instance: for animalcules of this class taken away, on the moment of separation from the parent insect, and put separately into distinct drops of water, still continue to exhibit the same prolific property without any diminution of power. There is another species mentioned by Bonnet, as existing in the infusion of he mpseeds, that divides crosswise, and separates in every new generation, into four distinct and perfect animalcules at the same time. It is probable, that all these are without sexual distinctions; and notwithstanding the general adherence of the disciples of Linneus to a contrary doctrine, it is equally probable that a vast variety of vegetables exist, which are in like manner devoid of sexual character. The bread-fruit tree of Otaheite, artocarpus incisus of Linneus, is a case completely in point; the propagation of which is highly curious and entertaining, but would occupy too much space to be minutely described in the present note. And although such sexual characters have been traced among many plants, inserted by the Swedish naturalist, in the order Cryptogamia, since his decease, yet it is a very numerous order still, and I apprehend will ever continue so.

Many vegetables have a power of propagating both by seeds and bulbs as well as buds, at the same time; that is, both oviparously and viviparously: and the aphis puceron or vine-fretter has been detected by Bonnet to possess a power perfectly similar, its young being viviparous in the full heat of summer, and oviparous in the latter and more chilly months of autumn. There are various other families of flies that are supposed to be equally gifted. The capability of ingrafting is not peculiar to vegetables; the fresh-water polypus and the sea-nettle (actinia) will endure the process with an equal degree of ease and effect.

The young of many animals are brought into the world in a state of extreme imperfection, without the sense of sight, or the use of their limbs; in other instances, they are able to assist themselves from the moment of their birth. So, while the seeds of most plants fall upon the earth in a dormant state, and require much care to render them productive, in the festuca vivipara and a few others, they begin to vegetate in the parent plant, and drop upon the soil with roots ready formed, perfect in all their powers, and capable of immediate increment.

Most plants that are propagated by sexual connexion possess hermaphrodite corollas; that is to say, every individual corolla posseses both the male and female organs of generation in itself. The corollas of the cucumber, however, as well as all other plants of the class Monœcia, are male and female separately, and require the conjoint faculties of the two to propagate their kind. There are other plants, again, that are male or female through every flower produced: and of consequence, unless the female herb be situated in the vicinity of the male, it will be barren through the whole term of its existence. Such is the order Dicœcia of Linneus. Among animals we seldom meet with more than the organs of a single sex attached to each individual. Reports of hermaphrodites have not been uncommon, indeed, both amidst quadrupeds and mankind; and nature certainly appears to have sported occasionally in this way, but never in such a manner as to have rendered the possession of

The race of worms, when once the mingling show'r
Wakes the warm ferment through the putrid mass.

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the two sexes perfect in the same subject. But the earth-worm, dew-worm, snails, eels, oysters, and many other species of shell fishes, are complete hermaphrodites; and the number of animals of this class is so considerable, that M. Poupart believes it to exceed that of those which are divided into sexes. See Mem. de l'Acad. des Sciences. While these propagate their kinds from their own single exertions, there are other shell-fishes, as we learn from Mr. Adanson, in his account of Senegal, that require the union of not less than three individuals for the same genial purpose. In like manner it has lately been proved by M. Girtanner, that the conferva fontinalis, first noticed by Dr. Priestley, requires heat, light, and water, though nothing else, for the production of this vegetable.

The hermaphrodite power of many of the animals here enumerated, has been long known to the world. It is mentioned by Homer and Athenæus, but more particularly in the following verses of Oppian:

Αλλ' ουκ εγχελυεσσιν ὁμοιον, ουδε χελωναις
Ουτ' ουν πουλυποδεσσι γαμου τελος, ουτε κελαινη
Μυραινη. λεχεων δε παρατροπον αισαν εχουσιν.
Αι μεν γαρ σπειρηδον επ' αλληλεσι χυθεισαι
Εγχελυες, δεμας υγρον αναστρωφωσι θαμειαι, &c.

ALIEUT i. 513.

Not thus conchs, eels, and polypi embrace,
Nor purple lampreys rear their embryo race.
In selfish coils, hermaphrodite, they sit,
And their own powers the vital spume emit,
Which gradual dropp'd on sands or slimy mud
A silver offering render to the flood.

Spalanzani detected many vegetable seeds, extremely diminutive in their form, the vitality of which it is almost impossible to destroy either by heat or chemical solvents. In like manner, he discovered the eggs of many animalcules confined in vegetable seeds, still possessing a power of producing their definite orders of insects, after such seeds had been exposed to the most intense heat of burning coals, and even the blow-pipe itself; and although reduced into the most subtle powder, after having hereby been converted into calces. Thus, too, many animals and vegetables have an equally wonderful power of resuscitation after apparent destruction: among the latter may be mentioned the nostoc and tremella, which perpetually spring up after they have seemed to perish; and among the former the chaos redivivum, the vorticella or wheel-animal, the sloth, and the tile-eel, a new species discovered by Spalanzani in the impalpable dust of bricks and tiles. In the case of this last insect, the alternate process of death and resurrection was carried on with success, and with the same animalcule, for not less than eleven times, by keeping it dry and without sand, and afterwards moistening it with water. Eggs and seeds, after a torpor of months or even years, are occasionally revived on being moistened with warm water; and in like manner, some shell-snails in the cabinets of the curious have revived on the same application, after having been kept in a dry state for ten or twelve years.

It was in consequence of such experiments, that the Count de Buffon established a system which appears strongly inclined to resuscitate the doctrine of equivocal generation contended for by Lucretius. According to this celebrated naturalist, all matter swarms with organic germs or molecules, which serve for the nutriment of organized bodies, till they acquire a state of maturity, and augmentation ceases; and for their seminal stores afterwards. But independently of seminal secretion, he contends that when large quantities of these prolific germs are collected in any part of an animal body, wherever such germs are compelled to remain together, they create certain orders of *living beings*, which have always been regarded as *real animals*. The tænia, the ascarides, all the worms found in the veins, in the liver, in wounds, in pus, and most of those discovered in putrid flesh, have, according to this system, no other origin. The eels in paste and vinegar, the tadpoles in the male semen, and all the pretended microscopic animals, are only different forms assumed, according

Præterea, cunctas itidem res vortere sese :
Vortunt se fluviei in frundeis, et pabula læta
In pecudes ; vortunt pecudes in corpora nostra
Naturam ; et nostro de corpore sæpe ferarum
Augescunt vires, et corpora pennipotentum.
Ergo omneis natura cibos in corpora viva
Vortit, et hinc sensus animantum procreat omneis :
Non aliâ longe ratione, atque arida ligna
Explicat in flammas, et in igneis omnia vorsat.
Jamne vides igitur, magni primordia rerum
Referre in quali sint ordine quæque locata,
Et conmixta quibus dent motus, adcipiantque ?
Tum porro, quid id est, animum quod percutit ipsum,
Quod movet, et varios sensus expromere cogit ;

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to circumstances, by this active matter, which has a perpetual tendency to orgazination. Hist. Naturelle tom. iii. See also note on Book IV. v. 1264, and Book V. v. 1104, of this poem.

When the conferva fontinalis, or green matter that grows at times so rapidly upon the surface of stagnant waters, was first discovered by Dr. Priestley ; and, I believe still later, when the mucor or mouldiness which was first observed by Mr. Ellis to grow on the surface of all putrefying vegetable or animal matter, it was the fashion to suppose that these vegetable substances were produced from seeds floating in the atmosphere, and hence deposited on the waters or putrefactions where they were generated. But the experiments of Dr. Ingenhouz have long falsified this idea ; and these have since been confirmed by some very curious and important ones by M. Patrin, who has completely succeeded in establishing the spontaneous generation of these very simple and newly discovered vegetables. See Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle appliquée aux Arts, tom. xiv. Dr. Darwin, who never suffered a system to lose any thing, when once imbibed by himself, seems to have carried this of spontaneous vitality to a most immoderate extreme. The reader may form some idea of its extravagance from the following passage with which he concludes one of his essays upon this subject. " But it may appear too bold, in the present state of our knowledge on this subject, to suppose that all vegetables and *animals now existing*, were originally derived from the smallest microscopic ones formed by spontaneous vitality ; and that they have,

Thus all things change to all things: foliage, fruits,
And the gay glebe to flocks, and herds convert;
And flocks, and herds to man; and man, in turn,
Feeds the foul strength of birds, and barb'rous beasts.
From every food, thus nature's chemic pow'r
Builds up the forms of life; in every class
Thus wakes the senses every class avows;
As through the winter-stack full oft she spreads
The rushing blaze, and turns the whole to fire.—
Seest thou not hence, then, of what vast concern
The modes in which primordial seeds combine,
Act, or re-act, give motion, or accept?
This creed what hinders? what perverts thy mind,
And locks thy senses from a truth so plain
That sentient things from things insensate flow?
What but that stocks, and stones, and earth's dull clod,

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by innumerable re productions, during innumerable centuries of time, gradually acquired the size, strength, and excellence of form and faculties, which they now possess; and that such amazing powers were originally impressed on matter and spirit, by the great Parent of Parents, Cause of Causes! Ens Entium!" Additional notes to Temple of Nature.

This theory of spontaneous vitality has been, however, expressly controverted by Redi, the father of experimental entomology, as well as by Trembley and Bonnet. But the general force of the argument advanced by the Roman bard does not depend upon its truth or falsehood. The fact remains the same, though the mode of accounting for it be different. It is equally true that

——into life th' insensate dung-hill rears
The race of worms:——

Whether we believe they spring equivocally from organic molecules, swarming throughout the putrid and fermenting substance of the dunghill; or that this latter affords nothing more than a proper nidus for the deposition of the fecundated eggs of flies and worms, which, in process of time, are hereby thrown into action, generate a new organization, and produce the new power of sensation. For no one, I apprehend, will contend that the eggs of the fly or worm, when first deposited, are possest of more sensation than the substance of the dunghill itself; and, thus which theory soever we imbibe, the position of Lucretius follows equally as a truth,

That sentient things, things void of sense create.

Ex insensilibus ni credas sensile gigni?
Nimirum, lapides, et ligna, et terra, quod unâ
Mixta tamen nequeunt vitalem reddere sensum;
Illud in hiis igitur fœdus meminisse decebit,
Non ex omnibus omnino, quæquomque creant res,
Sensile, et ex templo me gigni dicere sensus:
Sed magni referre, ea primum quantula constent,
Sensile quæ faciunt, et quâ sint prædita formâ;
Motibus, ordinibus, positurus denique, quæ sint;
Quarum nihil rerum in lignis, glebisque, videmus:
Et tamen hæc, quom sunt quasi putrefacta per imbreis,
Vermiculos pariunt; quia corpora materiaï,
Antiquis ex ordinibus permota novâ re,
Conciliantur ita, ut debent animalia gigni.
Deinde, ex sensilibus quom sensile posse creari
Constituunt, porro, ex aliis sentire suëti,
Mollia confaciunt: nam sensus jungitur omnis
Visceribus, nervis, venis, quæquomque videmus
Mollia mortali consistere corpore creta.

Sed tamen esto jam, posse hæc æterna manere:
Nempe tamen debent aut sensum partis habere,
Aut simileis totis animalibus esse putari.
At, nequeant per se partes sentire, necesse est;
Namque alios sensus membrorum respuit omnis:

Boast no sensation though alike educ'd ?—
Yet mark, attentive, the sage muse ne'er yet
Has urg'd that all things doubtless must alike
Spring forth percipient, and with sense endu'd:
But that of vast concern, as hence alone,
Sensation ceaseless flows—the modes diverse
Of motion, order, form, with which, through time,
Primordial atoms blend:—modes the dull clod
Knows not, its frame unorganiz'd and rude.
Though the dull clod, or sapless root as dull,
When the moist show'r the putrid strife has rous'd,
Themselves the vermin race in crowds create;
Chang'd, then, their nature, from arrangements new,
And full empower'd perceptive life to rear.

Those, too, who hold that sentient forms throughout
Spring but from sentient seeds, those seeds must deem
Soft and unsolid, since unsolid all,
And soft each region, where sensation reigns,
Th' interior bowels, and the flesh without;
And hence such seeds must doubtless waste to nought.

Yet grant their dates eternal: such must then
The total sense possess of things they rear,
Or sense of sep'rate parts: but parts alone
Have no perception, nor alone can live.
Each leans on each; the loose dismember'd hand

Nec manus a nobis potis est secreta, neque ulla
Corporis omnino sensum pars sola tenere.
Linquitur, ut totis animalibus adsimilentur;
Vitali ut possint consentire undique sensu.
Quî poterunt igitur rerum primordia dici,
Et leti vitare vias, animalia quom sint,
Atque, animalibus in mortalibus, una eademque?

Quod tamen ut possint, ab cœtu concilioque
Nihil facient præter volgum turbamque animantum:
Scilicet, ut nequeant homines, armenta, feræque,
Inter sese ullam rem gignere conveniundo.
Sic itidem, quâ sentimus, sentire necesse est.
Quod, si forte suum dimittunt corpore sensum,
Atque alium capiunt; quid opus fuit adtribui id, quod
Detrahitur? Tum præterea, quo fugimus ante,
Quâ tenus in pullos animaleis vortier ova
Cernimus alituum, vermeisque ecfervere, terram
Intempestivos quom putor cepit ob imbreis;

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Ver. 943. ——*from the warm ferment*
*Of earths putrescent, by the clouds bedew'd,*
*The vermin nations rise, with soul replete,*] Thus again Thomson, still evincing the same doctrine of spontaneous vitality:

——from the swampy fens

Drops pow'rless; nor can aught itself sustain,
From the full form, the total sense that flows.
What then remains but that each seed exists
An animal complete, endow'd throughout
With vital functions? but resolve, how then
Prove they th' immortal principles of things?
Whence draw the pow'r, possest by nought that breathes,
To live through time, and brave th' attacks of fate?
  But grant e'en this: their combination still
No forms could rear, but those of sentient life;
Nor men, nor herds, nor savage beasts produce
Aught but themselves; the sense generic shown
Varying as varies the generic frame.
  Nor urge that sentient seeds, at times, perchance,
Lose all sensation, and insensate live;
Why with an attribute so soon destroy'd
Robe them at all then? Rather, mark how soon
Th' insensate yolk incipient life betrays,
And springs a vital chick: mark, as the muse
Has earlier sung, how from the warm ferment
Of earths putrescent, by the clouds bedew'd,
The vermin nations rise, with soul replete,

---

Where *putrefaction* into *life* ferments,
And *breathes destructive myriads.*
SUMMER, v. 1028.

And Ovid, consistently with the same hypothesis, represents the putrescent carcase of an ox as giving birth to crowds of busy insects:

Scire licet gigni posse ex non sensibus sensus.
Quod, si forte aliquis dicet, dum taxat oriri
Posse a non sensu sensus, mutabilitate,
Ante, aliquo tamquam partu, quam proditur extra;
Huic satis illud erit, planum facere, atque probare,
Non fieri partum, nisi concilio ante coacto;
Nec quidquam conmutari sine conciliatu

---

——fervent exanima putri
De bove; mille animas una necata dedit. Fast. i.
The putrid carcase now ferments amain,
And thousands spring to life for one that's slain.

Ver. 952. *But from the sympathy of primal seeds :*] The more minutely we become acquainted with the operations of nature, the more clearly we perceive, that in her physical as well as her moral department, there exist certain inexplicable sympathies and antipathies which no exertion of man can possibly destroy. Gravitation itself may be adduced as an instance of general sympathy pervading every particle of matter, and compelling it to associate for the common good. The operation of the magnet upon iron, or their mutual desire of approximation, may be regarded as a particular sympathy: so also may the power of metallic substances to attract the electric aura. But as the attachment of this subtle fluid to metals at large appears stronger in every instance than its attachment to any other kind of substance, so does it seem to give a preference to some metals beyond what it discovers toward others: while, in the mean time, it evinces an insurmountable antipathy to silk, wax, glass, and all similar substances; the degree of antipathy towards one substance exceeding that towards another. The philosophy of chemistry unfolds this doctrine in a light still more conspicuous: and while it opens to us substances which will never combine, and between which there appears to subsist an eternal and insuperable dislike, it presents us also with substances attached to each other by every possible degree of affinity and elective attraction. Chemistry discovers to us, that oil will unite with alcohol, but not with water; that alcohol will unite with water, but not with alkali: that there is a sympathy, affinity, or elective attraction between water and calcareous earths, which enables the former to embrace, or dissolve in its pores, a definite quantity of the latter: that there is a stronger affinity between calcareous earths and acids, since a larger quantity will here be absorbed in proportion to the acid employed; while the menstruum, at the same time, remains limpid: and that again, there is an affinity far stronger than either, between acids and alkalis, which may literally be said to destroy each other by their embraces: and hence, when a due proportion of alkali is added to an acid, in which calcareous earth has been previously dissolved, the acid will immediately take hold of the alkali in preference to the earth; its former connexion will be relinquished, and the calcareous solvend will be precipitated to the bottom of the vessel. It is impossible, indeed, to pursue this subject, to notice the different elective attractions and repulsions, in many instances duplicated, and even triplicated, that chemistry unfolds to us, without being astonished at the faculties exhibited throughout the whole world of brute, unanimated matter.

From unanimated matter these peculiar and mysterious affections ascend to vegetable life, and display to us germs, molecules, and fibrils, uniting, not at random with germs, molecules, and fibrils, but each selecting the other, the female the male, and

Thus spreading sense where sense was none before.
Nor deem sensation senseless seeds create
Sole from some change anterior, long educ'd
Ere into birth the sentient being springs.
What more fallacious? since nor birth complete
Nor aught of change can Nature's self create
But from the sympathy of primal seeds:

---

the male the female; and this with the nicest discrimination of their specific powers of crassitude or tenuity, and consequently of reciprocal adaptation, without which no vital entity would ensue. So much imports it in the beautiful language of our poet, Book IV. 1320.

——that the seeds of life
With seeds should mix symphoneous, that the gross
Condense the rare, the rare the gross dilute.

Let us mount still higher, and we shall perceive in the animal kingdom, even in man himself, that a variety of substances possess a kind of idiopathetic influence over some member or organ of the corporeal frame, which they never exert, or at least in a subordinate degree over every other. Alcohol has a specific connexion with the liver; turpentine with the kidnies; cantharides with the neck of the urinary bladder; jalap with the intestinal canal, opium and peruvian bark with the whole nervous system; the former diminishing sensation, and the latter preventing the recurrence of the spasm of intermittent fevers.

In a manner somewhat similar, one member or organ of the percipient frame appears to possess a species of intimacy or connexion with some other member or organ, though considerably remote from itself, which it does not discover towards the system at large. Thus, physicians trace a sympathy between the liver and the left shoulder, which is said to be frequently possessed of peculiar uneasiness during a decay of the former. The same kind of sympathy subsists between the head and the stomach;—between the stomach and the external capillary vessels; and between these, and the glands of the kidnies: an affection of the one producing generally an affection of the other, and vice versâ.

The same kind of inexplicable sympathy may, perhaps, subsist between mind and mind, even allowing the mind itself to be material. And the view I have just taken of the natural world will, in some measure, unfold to us, I think, the cause of that species of moral affection, which has been termed pure, or *platonic love*, an elective attraction of mind to mind, which has been often denied by philosophers, and ridiculed by wits, and in many cases most justly, but which, if I mistake not, these observations seem to prove, may have a real foundation in nature. How mind operates upon mind we know not: into sensible contact it can never come: but neither does the sun or the moon in their operations upon the earth. The operation of motives and arguments is a long and circuitous mode of exciting reciprocity of affection: and it will often be found at last, that the affection thus produced, is of far inferior force, and indeed, of a nature altogether different from that excited by a certain indescribable sympathy, which sometimes compels the soul to feel more pleased with a person of less intellectual, and perhaps, even moral worth, than with another person whose endowments are confessedly superior. This view of the subject may be carried still further, and affords some foundation for the belief of an occasional intercourse between ourselves and the spirits

Principiôm; nequeunt ullius corporis esse
Sensus ante ipsam genitam naturam animantis:
Nimirum, quia materies disjecta tenetur
Aëre, fluminibus, terris, terrâque creatis;
Nec, congressa modo, vitaleis convenienteis
Contulit inter se motus, quibus omne tuentes
Adcensei sensus animantum quamque tuentur.
Præterea, quam vis animantem grandior ictus,
Quam patitur natura, repente adfligit, et omneis
Corporis atque animi pergit confundere sensus:
Dissoluuntur enim posituræ principiorum,
Et penitus motus vitales inpediuntur;
Donec materies, omneis concussa per artus,
Vitaleis animæ nodos e corpore solvit,
Disparsamque foras per caulas eïcit omneis.
Nam quid præterea facere ictum posse reamur
Oblatum, nisi discutere, ac dissolvere, quæque?
Fit quoque, utei soleant, minus oblato acriter ictu,
Reliquiæ motûs vitalis vincere sæpe;

---

of our departed friends—between this world and others around us. But I am aware that I am bordering on the regions of fancy; yet am I supported in my excursion by the very system of Epicurus himself, and consequently of our own poet, which admits, that some such intercourse with superior beings may be obtained by deep retirement, and mental abstraction; and, what is of far more importance to me, by the clear and unequivocal intimations of revelation: the Jewish and Christian scriptures both equally presupposing the superintendance of individuals, of distinct churches, nations, and the world at large, by spirits or angels expressly delegated to their respective offices. But I must leave the subject, which it would be, nevertheless, pleasant to pursue. The reader may consult, if he chuse to extend it farther, a German volume which has lately been brought forwards, but I believe, not yet trans-

Nor, till the frame percipient be combin'd,
Can e'er perception flow; since wide through space,
In earth, in air, in streams, and lambent fire,
Are spread the rude materials, unarrang'd,
And void of social bond, whence first exists
Each vital motion, whence each guardian sense
Springs, and the complicated frame protects.
When too, abrupt, falls some tremendous blow,
Throughout the system suffers, every sense
Of soul, and body discompos'd alike.
Then fails th' arrangement of primordial seeds,
Each vital action fails; and, shook severe
Through every limb, the principles of life
Dissolve each fond connexion, quit their post,
And through th' external pores fly off at large.
For what but this can force extreme effect?
The dread solution, and the death of all.
But oft, when less the violence display'd,
The vital motions left may triumph still,

---

lated into English, entitled "Dokimion oder Practischer Versuch, &c." "A practical Essay on the real Relation subsisting between the Living and the Spirits of the Departed." The author has conducted his inquiry with no small degree of ability, and has advanced many positions that are entitled to serious attention, though his conjectures are occasionally extravagant, and too little restrained.

Sympathy then seems to be a power, though often an inexplicable one, pervading all nature; acting alike on body and on soul. And it is with peculiar propriety, therefore, our poet traces its existence in the very first creation, and the simplest elements of all things:

——nor birth complete,
Nor aught of change can nature's self create
But from the sympathy of primal seeds.

Vincere, et ingenteis plagæ sedare tumultus,
Inque suos quidquid rursus revocare meatus;
Et quasi jam leti dominantem in corpore motum
Discutere, ac pene amissos adscendere sensus.
Nam, quâ re potius leti jam limine ab ipso
Ad vitam possint, conjectâ mente, revorti;
Quam, quo decursum prope jam siet, ire et abire?
Præterea, quoniam dolor est, ubi materiaï
Corpora, vi quadam per viscera viva, per artus,
Solicitata, suis trepidant in sedibus intus;
Inque locum quando remigrant, fit blanda voluptas:
Scire licet, nullo primordia posse dolore
Tentari; nullamque voluptatem capere ex se:
Quandoquidem non sunt ex illis principiorum
Corporibus, quorum motus novitate laborent,
Aut aliquem fructum capiant dulcedinis almæ:
Haud igitur debent esse ullo prædita sensu.
Denique, utei possunt sentire animalia quæque,
Principiis si jam est sensus tribuendus eorum;
Quid? genus humanum propritim de quibus auctum est,
Scilicet et risu tremulo concussa cachinnant,
Et lacrumis spargunt rorantibus ora, genasque;

---

Ver. 988. *From those, forsooth, incited quick to laugh, Those down whose cheeks perpetual tears distil,* &c.] These verses are borrowed, almost verbatim, from the first book; where the reader will find they run thus:

And quell the mighty tumult, and recall,
From the rude grasp of fate, each active power
Marshal'd anew, and every sense relume.
For else, why rather should those powers retreat
Back from destruction with recruited strength,
Than still proceed, and burst the bars of life?

As pain, too, springs when, midst th' interior frame,
Or limbs extreme, by sudden force convuls'd
Each vital atom shakes through all its course,
But yields to pleasure when the shock subsides,—
Since primal seeds can ne'er such shock sustain,—
No pain they know, nor e'er the fruit can pluck
Of dear delight; hence nought of sense is theirs.

But if, that things sensation may possess,
Their seeds primordial must possess the same,—
Say, from what seeds, then, springs the race of man?
From those, forsooth, incited quick to laugh,
Those down whose cheeks perpetual tears distil,

---

——For then must seeds
Hold powers adverse, and laugh, and shake their sides,
While tears of anguish down their cheeks distil.
Ver. 1011.

Multaque de rerum mixturâ dicere callent,
Et, sibi proporro quæ sint primordia, quærunt:
Quandoquidem totis mortalibus adsimilata,
Ipsa quoque ex aliis debent constare elementis;
Inde alia ex aliis, nusquam consistere ut ausis.
Quippe sequar, quodquomque loqui ridereque dices,
Et sapere, ex aliis eadem hæc facientibus, ut sit.
Quod, si delira hæc furiosaque cernimus esse,
Et ridere potest non ex ridentibus auctus,
Et sapere, et doctis rationem reddere dictis,
Non ex seminibus sapientibus, atque disertis:
Quî minus esse queant ea, quæ sentire videmus,
Seminibus permixta carentibus undique sensu?
Denique, cœlesti sumus omnes semine oriundi;
Omnibus ille idem pater est; unde alma liquenteis

---

Ver. 1001. *All spring from heav'n, etherial, all that live:*

*The sire of all is* Ether:——] So far the system of Epicurus agrees with the creed of those philosophers who contended for the ever-present operation of a divine power, as well as with the popular mythology of Greece and Rome: for the supreme Jupiter, the father of gods and men, was peculiarly denominated the god of ether, or the air. The terms Æther and Jupiter, are very generally, therefore, convertible expressions: thus, in the first Ode of Horace, *sub* Jove *frigido*, can only be translated "*in the cold* Air," or *atmosphere*; and thus Virgil, in the following verses, which have been already remarked upon as an imitation from Lucretius in note on Book I. v. 287, manifestly uses the word Æther for Jupiter.

Tum pater omnipotens fœcundis imbribus *Æther*
Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit, &c.
Georg. II. 325.

Or, as it still more explicitly occurs in another passage of the same poet:

A Jove principium, Musæ: Jovis omnia plena.
Ecl. iii. 60.

Jove hymn we first, for all is full of Jove.

Consimilar to, and almost synonymous with which, are the following exquisite verses, that open the Phænomena of Aratus:

Εκ Διος αρχωμεσθα, τον ουδεποτ' ανδρες εωμεν
Αρρητον· μεσται δε Διος πασαι μεν αγυιαι,
Πασαι δ' ανθρωπων αγοραι· μεστη δε θαλασσα,
Και λιμενες· παντη δε Διος κεχρημεθα παντες·
Του γαρ και γενος εσμεν·

And those deep-vers'd in causes, and effects,
Discussing grave the seeds that rear themselves.
For grant this system, and whate'er exists
Must spring from seeds minuter, endless urg'd,
And draw, progressive, every power display'd
Of thought, or laughter, from the parent stock.
This if thou smile at, and contend that things
With pow'r endow'd of laughter, speech, and thought
Still rise from seeds that no such pow'rs avow,
Why not concede, then, sentient things alike
May flow from seeds of total sense devoid?

All spring from heav'n, etherial, all that live:
The sire of all is Ether: he, full oft,

---

From God we spring—whom man can never trace,
Though heard, seen, tasted, felt in every place.
The loneliest path, by mortal seldom trod,
The crowded city, all is full of God;
Oceans, and lakes—for God is all in all—
And we are all his offspring.

This is the passage which St. Paul so successfully refers to, and quotes in his animated oration to the Athenians on Mars-hill: "For, in him, we live and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, *For we are also his offspring.*" Acts, xvii. 28.

This quotation cannot but remind us of the following consentaneous verses in Pope's Essay on Man:

All are but parts of one stupendous whole;
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;
That chang'd through all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth, as in th' etherial frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.

Essay I.

This kind of general proposition, only differently interpreted, will apply therefore, as I have before observed, to the tenets of most philosophers, ancient or modern, as well as to the Christian system. It constitutes an important doctrine in the ordinances of Menu, and is particularly applied to the eternal Gayatri, or mother of the Veda, "that divine and unparalleled light," as she is there denominated, "which illumines all, delights all; from which all proceed;

Humoris guttas mater quom Terra recepit,
Feta parit nitidas fruges, arbustaque læta,
Et genus humanum; parit omnia secla ferarum;
Pabula quom præbet, quibus omnes corpora pascunt,
Et dulcem ducunt vitam, prolemque propagant:
Quapropter merito maternum nomen adepta est.
Cedit item retro, de terrâ quod fuit ante,
In terras; et, quod missum est ex ætheris oris,

---

to which all must return; and which alone can irradiate our intellects." Sir William Jones, vol. iii. 62. So, in the Upanishad, translated into Persian by the order of the emperor Dara Shecuh, we are told, that "THE UNIVERSAL SOUL filleth all time; is present in every place: he is the sight of sights, the hearing of hearings, the thought of thoughts, the science of sciences; and hence, can neither be seen, comprehended, or learned: he is the root and principle of all things." See the Latin version of this book by Anquetil du Perron, tom. I. Paris, 1802. As also note on ver. 665, of the present book.

In the earlier part of his life, Virgil was, undoubtedly, an Epicurean; and his sixth eclogue, in which the principles of this philosophy are briefly developed, is supposed, by the critics, to be nothing more than the substance of a lecture delivered to himself and his friend Varro, by Syro, their common tutor, of whom Cicero makes mention in his Epist. Famil. l. vi. 11, under the fictitious names of Silenus, Chromis, and Mnasilus. There is nothing extraordinary, therefore, that the writings of Virgil at this time should be consentaneous with those of Lucretius: but Virgil appears afterwards to have been converted to the system, either of Plato or Pythagoras, philosophers who, in the main, seem not to have differed very essentially from each other. When, therefore, at this period of his life, he meets with another opportunity of developing the origin of the universe, as he does in book VI. of his Æneid, and in the person of Anchises, he publishes the doctrine he had lately embraced, and discards those parts of his former tenets which are inimical to it. But the passage of Lucretius now before us, as well as that which is a continuation of the same theory, beginning at Book I. v. 287, will as readily accord with the opening of Virgil's new creed, as of his old. The commencement of this new creed, however, is beautiful, and I shall copy it:

Principio cœlum, ac terras, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum lunæ, Titaniaque astra
*Spiritus intus alit*, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.
Inde hominum pecudumque genus, vitæque volantum,
Et quæ marmoreo fert monstra sub æquore pontus.
Igneus est ollis vigor, et *cælestis origo*
Seminibus. ÆNEID, l. vi. v. 724.

Know, first, that heaven and earth's compacted frame,
And flowing waters, and the starry frame,
And both the radiant lights, one common soul
Inspires and feeds, and animates the whole.
This active mind, infus'd through all the space,
Unites, and mingles with the mighty mass.
Hence, men and beasts the breath of life obtain;
And birds of air, and monsters of the main.
Th' etherial vigour is in all the same,
And every soul is fill'd with equal flame.

WARTON.

In dulcet drops descends of genial rain
And the bland Earth impregnates. Timely, then,
Rises the glossy blade, the joyous leaf
Shoots forth, and man and beast, in countless tribes,
Fed from the various banquet of the fields,
Live their gay hours, and propagate their kinds.
Maternal, hence, is Earth most justly nam'd.
Thus all things rise, thus all again return:
Earth takes what earth bestow'd; and back to heaven,

---

Ver. 1002. —Ether: *he, full oft,*
*In dulcet drops descends*] More exquisitely still is the same idea conveyed by the Psalmist, lxviii. 8.

The earth shook; *the heavens also dropped;*
Even Sinai itself at the presence of God,
At the presence of God, the God of Israel.

Ver. 1009. *Maternal, hence,* &c.] On this subject the poet descants more at large in Book V. 810, and following; where the same idea recurs almost in the same words; as it also does in Book V. v. 838.

It is to this and the ensuing verse that Klopstock appears to have had his eye directed, in the opening of the third book of his Messiah; and his paraphrase is truly beautiful:

Sey mir gegrüsst! ich sehe dich wieder, die du mich gebahrest,
Erde, mein mütterlich land, die du mich in külendem schoosse
Einst bey den schlafenden Gottes begräbst, und meine gebeine
Sanft bedeckest.

Once more I hail thee, once behold thee more,
*Earth! soil maternal!* thee, whose womb of yore
Bore me; and soon beneath whose gelid breast
These limbs shall sink in soft and sacred rest.

Ver. 1010. *Thus all things rise, thus all again return: Earth takes what earth bestow'd; and, back to heaven,* &c.] Epicharmus has a passage to this effect, which, it is probable, our poet had in his recollection, when he composed these verses: Συνεκριθη, observes he, of the dead man, και διεκριθη, και απηλθεν οθεν ηνθη, παλιν· γα μεν εις γην, πνευμα δε ανω. "The component substance is now decomposed, and returned to the different quarters whence it sprang; its earthy parts to earth, its spirit to heaven above." In the following verses of Euripides, the same idea, and probably derived from the same source, more nearly still approaches the passage of Lucretius now under our consideration:

Οθεν δε εκαστος εις το σωμ' αφικετο,
Εν ταυτ' απηλθε· πνευμα μεν προς αιθερα,
Το σωμα δε εις γην.

When man returns to matter, whence he rose,
He severs total; to the heavens ascends
The spirit, and the grosser corse to earth.

The doctrine was entirely that of Epicurus; and Du Rondelle has hence attempted to prove that Epicurus, notwithstanding a host of expressions apparently to the contrary, was, in reality, a believer in the immortality of the soul. But such a deduction is altogether fanciful, and completely disproved by the whole of Book III. of the poem before us.

Id rursum cœli relatum templa receptant :
Nec sic interimit mors res, ut materiaï
Corpora confaciat, sed cœtum dissupat ollis :
Inde aliis aliud conjungit ; et ecficit, omnes
Res ita convortant formas, mutentque colores,
Et capiant sensus, et puncto tempore reddant ;
Ut noscas referre, eadem primordia rerum,
Cum quibus, et quali positurà, contineantur,
Et quos inter se dent motus, adcipiantque :
Neve putes æterna parum residere potesse
Corpora prima, quod in summis fluitare videmus
Rebus, et interdum nasci, subitoque perire.
Quin etiam refert, nostris in versibus ipsis,
Cum quibus, et quali sint ordine quæque locata.
Namque eadem cœlum, mare, terras, flumina, solem,
Significant ; eadem fruges, arbusta, animanteis.
Si non omnia sint, at multo maxuma pars est

---

Ver. 1015. ——*every form commutes,*
*And every tint ; perception springs amain,*
*And, instantaneous, wastes again to nought.*] It is to this passage the cardinal Polignac directed his eye, when, in the fourth book of his poem, in opposition to the Epicurean system, he endeavoured to prove, from this perpetual change and transformation of things into things, that the world could not be eternal : an attempt which, so far as relates to Lucretius himself, was almost useless ; since his first book is totally occupied with proofs, that all things have had a beginning, and he is immediately, in the present book, about to demonstrate, that the world itself, at least the present arrangement of the world, must have a termination. The verses, to which I refer, are as follow :

Semina de arboribus, de semine provenit arbos.
Nulla arbos igitur, nullum quoque semen ab ævo.
Sic ortum cœpisse diem noctemque necesse est :

Remount th' ethereal dews from heav'n that fell.
Yet death destroys not the prime seeds of things,
But scatters only; atoms hence commix
With stranger-atoms, every form commutes,
And every tint; perception springs amain,
And, instantaneous, wastes again to nought.
Of such vast moment are the modes diverse
In which primordial seeds their posts arrange,
Act, and re-act, give motion, and accept:
For deem not seeds thus floating most minute
Through the vast whole, now obvious to the view,
Now quick disperst, can ne'er eternal live.
Such then, the moment, as already urg'd,
With which the types, these numbers that compose,
Change their positions, and retreat, or blend.
Thus the same letters, or with variance small,
Heaven, earth, and water, seas, and suns express,
Fruits, plants, and mortals; common are the types,
The terms but change from combinations new.

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Nempe dies noctem sequitur; sequiturque diem nox.
Ver, æstas, autumnus, hyems, annum ordine ducunt;
Inque vicem se se, mundi argumenta recentis,
Excipiunt. Inter sibi succedentia nullum est
Quod non potest aliud veniat.

Anti-Lucret. lib. iv. 1377.

Seeds spring from trees, the tree from seeds ascends,
Hence of eternal date can neither boast.
So night from day, and day from night must flow,
For midnight, noon, and noon-tide night succeeds.
Spring, summer, autumn, winter, lead the year
Around, harmonious; and with joint acclaim
The world demonstrate but of recent birth.
Things yield to things alternate; nor can aught
Be trac'd through nature nothing ne'er that rears.

Ver. 1024. *Such then, the moment, as already urg'd,*
*With which the types, these numbers that compose,*]
See Book I. ver. 918, and Book II. 698.

Consimilis; verum positurâ discrepitant res:
Sic ipsis in rebus item jam materiaï
Intervalla, viæ, connexus, pondera, plagæ,
Concursus, motus, ordo, positura, figuræ
Quom permutantur, mutari res quoque debent.
Nunc animum nobis adhibe veram ad rationem:
Nam tibi vehementer nova res molitur ad aureis
Adcidere, et nova se species obtendere rerum.
Sed neque tam facilis res ulla est, quin ea primum
Difficilis magis ad credundum constet; itemque
Nihil adeo magnum, neque tam mirabile quidquam,
Quod non paullatim minuant mirarier omnes.
Principio, cœli clarum purumque colorem,
Quemque in se cohibent palantia sidera passim,
Lunamque, et solis præclarâ luce nitorem:
Omnia quæ nunc si primum mortalibus essent,
Ex inproviso si sint objecta repente;
Quid magis hiis rebus poterat mirabile dici,
Aut minus ante quod auderent fore credere gentes?
Nihil ut opinor; ita hæc species miranda fuisset:
Quam, tibi jam nemo, fessus satiate videndi,
Subspicere in cœli dignatur lucida templa.

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Ver. 1031. *Thus change material things: their primal seeds*
*In scite, connexion, interval of space,* &c.] This position our poet has likewise had occasion to refer to before. See ver. 734, of the book before us.

Thus change material things: their primal seeds
In scite, connexion, interval of space,
Position, motion, weight, attractive power,
In these as varying, varies the result.

Now bend thy mind to truths profounder still:
For stranger doctrines must assault thine ear,
And a new scene of wonders yet unfold.
Whate'er is new, though obvious and defin'd,
Gains not an easy credence; but when once
Flies the fresh novelty, th' unsteady soul
Yields its full faith to facts mysterious most.
The vault of heav'n cerulean, spangled thick
With stars, and with th' effusive lustre chear'd
Of sun, and moon refulgent—were, at once,
This scene celestial o'er the race of man
To burst abrupt—how would the nations start!
What wonders, then, be trac'd! with what vast toil
Would e'en the sage the prospect preconceive!
Yet now, full sated with the scene sublime,
Man scarce lifts up his listless eyes to heaven.

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Ver. 1049. *Yet now, full sated with the scene sublime,*
*Man scarce lifts up his listless eyes—*] Akenside has marked, with equal accuracy, this indifference with which mankind survey whatever has been long familiar to them:

Desine quapropter, novitate exterritus ipsâ,
Exspuere ex animo rationem; sed magis acri
Judicio perpende: et, si tibi vera videntur,
Dede manus; aut, si falsum est, adcingere contra.
Quærit enim rationem animus, quom summa loci sit
Infinita foris, hæc extra mœnia mundi,
Quid sit ibei porro, quo prospicere usque valet mens;
Atque animi jactus liber sit, quo velit ipse.
Principio, nobis in cunctas undique parteis,
Et latere ex utroque, infraque, superque, per omne
Nulla est finis, utei docui, res ipsaque per se
Vociferatur, et elucet natura profundi.
Nullo jam pacto veri simile esse putandum est,
Undique quom vorsum spatium vacet infinitum,
Seminaque innumero numero, summâque profundâ,
Multimodis volitent, æterno percita motu;
Hunc unum terrarum orbem, cœlumque, creatum:
Nihil agere illa foris tot corpora materiaï;
Quom præsertim hic sit naturâ factus, et ipsa,

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——witness the neglect
Of all familiar prospects, though beheld
With transport once; the fond attentive gaze
Of young astonishment, the sober zeal
Of age, commenting on prodigious things.
Pleas. of Imag. v. 234, b. i.

Ver. 1055. *Urg'd, thus, by truth, beyond the world's wide walls,*] The whole of this, and the three succeeding lines, are omitted in Creech's version; but on what account I am totally at a loss to conjecture. The more accurate Marchetti gives us the following translation:

Essendo fuor di questo nostro mondo
Spazio infinito; l' anima ricerca,
Ciò qu'egli sia fin dove può la mente
Penetrare a veder: dove lo stesso
Animo può spiegar libero il volo.

Cease, then, alarm'd by aught profound, or strange,
Right reason to reject; weigh well the proofs
Each scheme advances; if by truth upheld
Embrace the doctrine; but, if false, abjure.
Urg'd thus, by truth,—beyond the world's wide walls
Since space spreads boundless, the redundant mind,
Free in its flights, pants, ardent, to discern
What fills those realms where sight can never soar.
And first, th' ENTIRE OF THINGS, above, below,
Search where thou wilt, on every side alike
Spreads unconfin'd: this, as already taught,
Right reason proves, and many a clam'rous fact.
Then deem not thou, since thus perpetual space
Flows infinite, and infinite the seeds
That, from exhaustless founts, in endless modes
Fly through the void, by endless motions urg'd,
Deem not this visual system of the heav'ns
Alone exists, unparallel'd by aught,
And that all matter elsewhere sleeps supine.

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Ver. 1067. *Deem not this visual system of the heav'ns*
*Alone exists, unparallel'd by aught,*
*And that all matter elsewhere sleeps supine.*] The plurality of worlds is a doctrine of ancient date; discredited, indeed, by Thales and Empedocles, and even by Pliny; but asserted and maintained by Democritus, Pythagoras, Epicurus, Heraclitus, Anaximander, and a host of other philosophers, both Greek and Roman, whose names it would be easy to enumerate. Such, indeed, was the advance which some sages had made towards the Copernican system itself, that not only the diurnal motion of the earth round its own axis was maintained by many of them, a doctrine which, as we learn from Cicero, (Tusc. Quæst.) was first introduced by Nicetas, of Syracuse; but Philolaus, one of the earlier disciples of Pythagoras, actually discovered its annual motion in the ecliptic, and represented it as revolving, like a star,

Sponte suâ, forte obfensando semina rerum
Multimodis, temere, in cassum, frustraque, coacta,

round the central fire. With a conjecture, thus bold and accurate, thus capable of leading on to the full developement of the grand and total fact itself, it is astonishing that mankind should have suffered themselves to have remained, for more than two thousand years afterwards, the dupes of system after system, alike unsatisfactory, perplext, and even inapplicable: more especially when we reflect that, according to his own confession, it was this happy conjecture of the earlier Pythagoreans that, first of all, gave Copernicus himself the idea of that theory, which he so thoroughly unfolded, and by which he has so justly immortalized his name. Aristarchus, the Samian, indeed, as we are assured by Archimedes, revived the doctrine of Philolaus, about a thousand years after its first invention, but with an unaccountable want of success.

The first geometrical idea that appears to have been entertained of the world at large, as most co-incident with sensible appearances, was that of an immense but irregular plane, encircled on all sides by a boundless expanse, out of which the celestial luminaries daily ascended, forming an arch over the atmosphere by their quotidian path, and sinking every evening to repose. It was long after this, that the globular figure of the earth was demonstrated, or even imagined: but when once this latter opinion began to prevail, it was easy to conceive the existence of celestial spheres. The sun, the moon, and the planets, had now, therefore, three several spheres assigned them for their habitations; and the stars were supposed to be fixt, like gems, to the concave surface of an immense crystalline shell, which embraced the whole in its circumference. The spheres thus bestowed upon the celestial bodies, although capable of explaining some few of the phænomena that occurred, were very incompetent to an explanation of the whole, and other spheres were hence conceived, and added to those already acknowledged to exist. And so considerable were the multiplications of spheres bestowed on the heavens by Eudoxus, Callippus, Aristotle, and Fracastorio, that they amounted, in the era of this last philosopher, about two centuries ago, to no less a number than seventy-four: and the overloaded hypothesis became as intricate and inexplicable as the heavens were imagined to be themselves. The embarrassment was felt, and it was attempted to be relieved by another and a more artificial system, that I mean of Epicycles and Eccentric Circles. This, which was the original invention of Apollonius, received its last improvements from Ptolemy; from whom it has, in general, derived its name. In this system, the spheric motions were still continued, but every luminary, whilst revolving in its own orb, was supposed to have the centre of its orb carried at the same time round the circumference of another circle. By the introduction of this theory, several difficulties were undoubtedly removed; but multitudes still remained; and to obviate these was introduced the contrivance of the Equant, or Equalizing Circle. For a more full and particular account of which, as also for a more complete history of the whole of this branch of natural philosophy, I refer the reader to La Place's System de la Nature.

This system of Ptolemy, or of Epicycles and Eccentric Circles, continued, after its invention, till the new theory of Copernicus, introduced in the sixteenth century. Copernicus was highly dissatisfied with the theory in general use; its complications were most perplexing, and its multifarious corrections fatigued the imagination: nor did it solve half the difficulties which were perpetually arising. He resolved, therefore, with patient investigation, to examine all the different theories and conjectures on the same sublime subject, which had ever been entertained by philosophers, or of which any account could be traced. He, at last, arrived, as I have before observed, at the opinion of some of the first disciples of Pythagoras, respecting the revolution of the earth in the ecliptic: and from this moment he resolved to make this conjecture the basis of a new theory. Instead, therefore, of continuing motion to the sun, he resolved to conceive of the sun as a permanent body; and instead of

Since too, of its own nature the vast mass
Sprang forth spontaneous, rousing every pow'r

continuing the earth in a state of quietude, he transferred the motion of the former to the latter. And thus, by fixing the sun in the centre of the planetary system, by making all the planets revolve around it, in different orbits, and with different velocities, by comprehending the orbits of Venus and Mercury within that of the earth, and throwing those of Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn beyond it; and, at the same time, by conceiving the revolution of the earth round its axis from west to east, while this axis remained always parallel to itself, though inclined, in some degree, to the plane of the earth's orbit, he solved, at once, almost every difficulty which no other system could solve; and introduced a theory, plain, simple, and intelligible, in the stead of crude, fanciful, perplext, and unsatisfactory hypotheses. Whatever is new, however, as Lucretius has just before asserted, with much truth,

——though obvious and defin'd,
Gains not an easy credence.

Copernicus was convinced of this: he was fearful of the laugh of some philosophers, and of the hypercriticism of others; and, probably, foresaw the anathemas which the bigotry of the Roman church very shortly afterwards thundered out against his system: in consequence of which, he kept the entire plan concealed from the public eye for thirty years after its invention. At last, in the extremity of old age, he suffered it to be extorted from him; but died as soon as it was printed, and before it was published, being, as is generally supposed, terrified to death at the prospect of a persecution for heresy.

The mode in which the planetary system actually moves was thus established by the immortal labours of Copernicus. But the express difference and precise velocities of these motions, were reserved to be unfolded by junior philosophers: and as soon as the prejudices of the world, which were at first so powerfully excited against the new theory, began to subside, it is truly astonishing to notice the improvements which poured in from sages of almost every country in Europe, upon the Copernican doctrine, and the sudden blaze of information that irradiated the human mind. Amongst those, however, who most contributed to this increase of knowledge, I ought not to conceal the names of Tycho Brahe, Gallileo, Kepler, and Des Cartes; and, last of all, the name of our own countryman, Sir Isaac Newton. But to pursue the history of the experiments and observations of these, and other philosophers of nearly the same era, and of high and deserved renown, would occupy too much space; and be deviating too widely from the main scope of these notes. Some farther information on the same subject, however, as being more intimately connected with the Epicurean doctrines there referred to, will be found in note on ver. 528, Book V. of this poem. I cannot consent, however, to suppress the names of those three pre-eminent labourers in the philosophic vineyard, upon whom the whole spirit of Newton appears to have been poured forth after his decease: I mean Clairaut, Euler, and D'Alembert: all of whom pursued the doctrine of gravitation till they established it as a principle of universal action: to the two former of whom we are indebted for elaborate theories of the moon, as also of the derangements of Saturn and Jupiter; and to the latter, for the doctrine of the precession of the equinoxes.

With the astronomic or cosmogonic doctrine of the Hindus and other Oriental nations, we are not at present much acquainted. Some information, however, upon this subject, but principally connected with mythology, may be found in the note on Book I. v. 865. of this poem, in which I have observed that the Hindus, in conjunction with the Chinese, conceive the same kind of subtile spirit to pervade all natural bodies, and encompass creation, which was conjectured, with a trifling variation, both by Des Cartes and Newton; which invisible fluid, the Bramins denominate in their Vedas, a *fifth element*. But a much greater resemblance to the Newtonian system exists in the Hindu doctrine of the mutual and universal attraction of the elementary particles of matter. This doctrine is stated to occur in a variety

Tandem coaluerint ea, quæ, conjecta repente,
Magnarum rerum fierent exordia semper,
Terraï, maris, et cœli, generisque animantum.
Quâ re etiam atque etiam taleis fateare necesse est
Esse alios alibei congressus materiaï,
Qualis hic est; avido conplexu quem tenet æther.

Præterea, quom materies est multa parata,
Quom locus est præsto, nec res, nec caussa moratur
Ulla; geri debent nimirum, et confieri, res.
Nunc, et seminibus si tanta est copia, quantam
Enumerare ætas animantum non queat omnis;
Visque eadem, et natura, manet, quæ semina rerum
Conjicere in loca quæque queat, simili ratione
Atque huc sunt conjecta; necesse est, confiteare
Esse alios aliis terrarum in partibus orbeis,
Et varias hominum genteis, et secla ferarum.

Huc adcedit, uti in summâ res nulla sit una,

---

of Sanscrit writings; but there is an account of it, so intelligible and precise, in the allegoric poem of *Shirin* and *Ferhad*, or *the Divine* Spirit, and *a Human Soul disinterestedly pious*, that I cannot forbear extracting the following passage which forms a part of the very learned and instructive discourse delivered by Sir W. Jones, to the members of the Asiatic Society, Feb. 20th, 1794. "There is a strong propensity," observes the author of this elevated Oriental composition, "which dances through every atom, and attracts the minutest particle to some peculiar object: search this universe from its base to its summit, from fire to air, from water to earth, from all below the moon to all above the celestial spheres, and thou wilt not find a corpuscle destitute of that natural attractibility; the very point of the first thread, in this apparently tangled skein, is no other than such a principle of attraction; and all principles besides are void of a real

To every mode of motion, rashly oft,
Oft vain and fruitless, till, at length, it form'd
Th' unchanging rudiments of things sublime,
And heav'n, and earth, and main, and mortals rose :—
Hence doubly flows it, other systems still,
Like ours, must deck the vast etherial void,
Enfolded in its avaricious grasp.
Ample, moreo'er, the matter thus requir'd,
The place at hand, the cause efficient full,
Whence new creations may for ever spring.
Since, then, so boundless the great mass of seeds
That endless ages ne'er could cast th' amount,—
Since the same pow'r presides, the nature still
That rear'd this visual system, and alike
Those seeds can mould to systems such as ours—
The fact flows doubtless, mid the void immense,
That other worlds in other parts must rise,
Peopled with reas'ning, and with brutal tribes.
Add, too, that nought, through universal space,

basis: from such a propensity arises every motion perceived in heavenly or in terrestrial bodies. It is a disposition to be attracted, which taught hard steel to rush from its place, and rivet itself on the magnet; it is the same disposition which impels the light straw to attach itself firmly on amber: it is this quality which gives every substance in nature a tendency toward another, and an inclination forcibly directed to a determinate point." These notions, as the immortal president observes, are "vague indeed, and unsatisfactory:" but there is a truth and sublimity in them, and a parallelism with the theories of Kepler and Newton, which cannot but be astonishing to every one. The books, however, that contain the richest magazine of Indian astronomic knowledge are the *Surya Siddhanta*; the treatise of *Parasara* on the first age of Indian science, that of *Varaha* for the middle, and those of *Bhascara* for times comparatively modern.

Unica quæ gignatur, et unica solaque crescat;
Quin aliquoius siet secli, permultaque eodem
Sint genere: in primis animalibus indice mente
Invenies sic montivagum genus esse ferarum,
Sic hominum geminam prolem, sic denique mutas
Squamigerûm pecudes, et corpora cuncta volantum.
Quapropter, cœlum simili ratione, fatendum est,
Terramque, et solem, lunam, mare, cætera, quæ sunt,
Non esse unica, sed numero magis innumerali;
Quandoquidem vitæ depactus terminus alte
Tam manet hæc, et tam nativo corpore constant,
Quam genus omne, quod hiis generatim rebus abundans.
Quæ bene cognita si teneas, Natura videtur
Libera continuo, dominis privata superbis,
Ipsa suâ per se sponte omnia diis agere expers.
Nam, pro sancta deûm tranquillâ pectora pace
Quæ placidum degunt ævom, multumque serenum!

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Ver. 1102. *These truths avow'd, all nature shines at once,*
*Free in her acts, no tyrant to control,*
*Self-potent, and uninfluenc'd by the gods.*]
But by what gods is she uninfluenced, and from whose tyranny is she now freed? Certainly, in the first place, she is uninfluenced by, and totally liberated from, that capricious and arbitrary tyranny to which the gods of the people were supposed to be perpetually subjecting her: exciting storms to avenge this man, and sun-shine to prosper that; actuated by their own passions, and unmindful of the common good. From the tyranny of these capricious deities, it was the laudable aim of Lucretius to represent the universe as for ever freed. But there were deities, or blessed and immortal spirits, admitted under his own system—spirits whose faculties were far superior to those of mankind, yet who were, nevertheless, incompetent to create or govern the world. From the inadequate power and authority of these, therefore, the poet, at the same time, asserts the world to be liberated: for, which of them, he inquires, is able to sustain the mighty labour, or fulfil the mysterious purposes that are daily accomplishing? But surely he meaned not to deny all divine control whatsoever; for it was expressly affirmed by the Epicurean philosophy, that matter in a disorganised state is totally destitute of all sensation and intelligence; that

Springs single, the sole progeny produc'd,
The sole sustain'd; still countless every class,
Those, chief, percipient: the wild, mountain-herds,
The race of man consociate, the mute fish
With quiv'ring fin, and all th' aërial tribes.
Hence, too, nor heav'n, nor earth, nor sun, nor moon,
Nor the broad main, nor aught besides, alone
Can live, but each unlimited in kind.
Each the same substance, the same seeds of death,
Bears in its frame, that stamp the ranks diverse
More obvious, gender'd by connubial love.

These truths avow'd, all nature shines at once,
Free in her acts, no tyrant to control,
Self-potent, and uninfluenc'd by the gods.
For O, ye powers divine! whose tranquil lives
Flow free from care, with ceaseless sun-shine blest,—

---

there is no such thing as *chance*, (upon which subject, see the preceding life of Lucretius,) and that there certainly exists an unknown and unsearchable Being, to whom even the gods themselves are subject, and who exerciseth an unresisted authority among the inhabitants of the earth:

A Power unknown, who, from his awful, shades
O'erturns all human grandeur! treads to dust
Crowns, ensigns, rods!—the proudest boasts of state!
And laughs at all the mockery of man!
Book v. 1260.

This inscrutable being Epicurus represented as enjoying all immortality, and beatitude: at his mere will and command, the heavens, the planets, and all the phænomena of nature were produced; and to him he exhorts that mankind cease not to address their prayers and adorations. See Appendix to the life of Lucretius. This sublime passage has been hitherto totally misunderstood, and, of consequence, totally misinterpreted, by all the commentators upon our poet, whom I have yet met with, whether in Italian, French, or English, who have uniformly, and with unpardonable indolence, followed each other, and represented their author as an absolute atheist.

Quis regere inmensi summam, quis habere profundi
Indu manu validas potis est moderanter habenas ? 1095

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Ver. 1105. *For O, ye powers divine ! whose tranquil lives*
*Flow free from care, with ceaseless sun-shine blest,—*] There is, in Mr. Cowper's Task, an observation upon the doctrine here vulgarly supposed to be advanced, so well though at the same time so severely expressed, that I cannot avoid inserting it in this place :

Some say that in the origin of things,
When all creation started into birth,
The infant elements receiv'd a law
From which they swerve not since. That under force
Of that controlling ordinance they move,
And need not his immediate hand, who first
Prescrib'd their course, to regulate it now.
*Thus dream they ; and contrive to save a God*
*Th' incumbrance of his own concerns*, and spare
The great artificer of all that moves
The stress of a continual act, the pain
Of unremitted vigilance and care
As too laborious and severe a task !

Book vi.

Ver. 1107. *Who the vaſt whole could guide, midst all your ranks ?*
*Who grasp the reins that curb th'* ENTIRE OF THINGS ?] There is a grandeur and sublimity in this passage which it is perhaps impossible to surpass. Yet it cannot but remind us of some parts of the fearful and magnificent reply of the Almighty to Job out of the whirlwind.

The following may suffice as an example :

Cap. xxxviii.
4 איפה היית ביסדי ארץ
הגד אם ידעת בינה :
5 מי שם ממריה כי תדע
או מי נשה עליה קו :
6 על מה אדניה ה טבעו
או מי ירה אבן פנתה :
7 ברן יחד כוכבי בקר
ויריעו כל בני אלהים :
12 המי מיך צוית בקר
ידעתה שחר מקומו :
16 הבאת עד נבכי ים
ובחקר תהום התהלכת :
17 הנגלו לך שערי מות
ושערי צלמות תראה :
31 התקשר מעדנות כימה
או מושכות כסיל תפתח :
32 התוציא מזרות בעתו
ועיש על בויה תנחם :
33 הידעת חקות שמים
אם תשים משטרו כארץ :
34 התרים לעב קולך
ושפעת מים תכסך :
35 התשלח ברקים וילכו
ויאמרו לך הננו :

Cap. xl.
9 ואם זרוע כאל לך
ובי לוכמהו תרעם
10 עדה נא גאון וגבה
והוד והדר תלבש :
11 הפץ עברות אפך
וראה כל גאה והשפילהו :
12 ראה כל גאה הכניעהו
והרך רשעים תחתם ::

Chap. xxxviii.

4 Say, where wast thou when first the world uprose
Fresh from its God ? thy wisdom doubtless knows !
5 Who plann'd its bulk, its limits, its design ?
Stretch'd o'er its breadths the plummet and the line ?
6 What forms its basis ? props its nether pole ?
Who rear'd the top-stone o'er the mighty whole,
7 When, at the sight, the stars of morning sang,
And heaven's high cope with shouts of rapture rang ?—
12 With thee coeval, is the dawn thy slave ?
Springs, at thy nod, young phosphore from the wave ?
16 Hast thou the deep pervaded or descried
The dread abyss whence ocean draws his tide ?

Who the vast whole could guide, midst all your ranks?
Who grasp the reins that curb th' ENTIRE OF THINGS?

17 Are to thine eyes the gates of death reveal'd?
The gates where death's dread shadows lurk conceal'd?
31 Canst thou the teeming Pleiades restrain?
Or break Orion's icy bands in twain?
32 Whirl round th' undevious Zodiac? or the dance
Of bright Arcturus and his sons advance?
33 Knows't thou the laws that regulate the spheres?
Is it from thee that earth their power reveres?
34 Lift to the clouds thy voice, and will they swarm
Round thee in robes of show'rs and torrent storm?
35 Will, at thy call, the lightnings rush, and say,
"Lo! here we are,—command, and we obey?"

CHAP. xl.

9 Hast thou an arm like God? like him to roll
The volleying thunders round th' affrighted pole?
10 Come! cloath thyself with majesty and might,
Let glory gird thee with unsuff'ring light;
11 Shoot from thy nostrils flames of arrowy fire,
Search out the proud, and let them feel thine ire:
12 Search out the proud, and crush them to the dust;
With their own arms exterminate th' unjust.

For the few variations from our standard text, which are offered in this version, it is necessary to subjoin a remark or two.

Ch. xxxviii. 4.—"Thy wisdom doubtless knows." The common reading runs thus, *conditionally*: "Declare *if* thou hast understanding;" but the original rather implies an *irony* than a *condition*, and may be rendered with infinitely more force, "Declare, *for doubtless* thou hast understanding." The particle אם in the expression אם ידעת בינה is as clearly affirmative in the present instance, as in Hos. xii. 11. or Ps. cxxxix. 19. where it is uniformly so rendered.

The astronomic terms employed in v. 31, and 32, have puzzled the critics in every age, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, as well as those of more modern times. The synonymous renderings of the Septuagint seem nevertheless to be correct so far as they extend, notwithstanding the original is differently interpreted in several versions of greater antiquity. Admitting the Septuagint version, the Pleiades are elegantly opposed to Orion, as the vernal renovation of nature is opposed to its brumal destruction—the mild and open benignity of spring, to the severe and icy inactivity of winter. The Pleiades are a constellation of seven stars in the sign Taurus, and make their appearance in the spring-time, whence they are denominated by Virgil, *Vergiliæ*. The Hebrew term Chimah (כימה), with which the constellation Pleiades is supposed to correspond, is peculiarly beautiful in its origin, and implies whatever is desirable, delightful or lovely, for such is the meaning of the radical verb כמה. It is probably from כסיל (Chesil or Orion) that the Hebrews derived the name of their first winter month which they denominate Chisleu, and which corresponds with a part of our own November: the constellation itself appears towards the latter part of November, through December, and a part of January, and hence offers a correct and elegant synecdoche for the winter at large. The Arabians still employ the term كسل (Chesil) to express coldness and inactivity: *otium*, *torpor*, *frigus*. This, however, is not the word introduced into the Arabic version of the passage before us, but الثريا

The translators of the Septuagint did not know the real meaning of the Hebrew term מזרות (Mazaroth), and have therefore retained it without offering any synonym, in which conduct they have been imitated by our own standard bible. St. Chrysostom has given us two interpretations: Μαζουρωθ τα συστηματα των αστερων, αεν τη συνηθεια ζωδια καλουνται. αλλοι δε φασι Μαζουρωθ Ἑβραικην μεν ειναι την λεξιν σημαινειν δε τον αστερων μυνα. "Mazaroth, are those clusters of stars which are commonly called the Zodiac: though others assert that Mazaroth is a Hebrew term for Sirius or the dog-star." Of these interpretations the latter, I believe, has been generally preferred. I, however, have ventured to adopt the former, not merely on the authority of St. Chrysostom, but because I have no doubt that the term מזלות (Mazaloth), in 2 Kings, xxiii. 5. was originally the same word, and has been corrupted by the mistake of a ל for a ר; and because, in this latter place, it means

Quis pariter cœlos omneis convortere, et omneis
Ignibus ætheriis terras subfire feraceis;
Omnibus inve locis esse omni tempore præsto,
Nubibus ut tenebras faciat, cœlique serena
Concutiat sonitu? tum fulmina mittat, et ædeis
Ipse suas disturbet; et, in deserta recedens
Sæviat, exercens telum; quod sæpe nocenteis
Præterit, exanimatque indignos, inque merenteis?

Multaque, post mundi tempus genitale, diemque
Primigenum maris, et terræ, solisque, coortum,
Addita corpora sunt extrinsecus, addita circum
Semina, quæ magnum jaculando contulit Omne:
Unde mare et terræ possent augescere; et unde
Adpareret spatium cœli domus, altaque tecta
Tolleret a terris procul; et consurgeret aër.
Nam, sua quoique, locis ex omnibus, omnia plagis
Corpora distribuuntur, et ad sua secla recedunt:
Humor ad humorem, terreno corpore terra,

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obviously the Zodiac, and is so expressly rendered by Sextus Empiricus, and many others. The two words, moreover, are written alike in the Septuagint, as well as by Theodoret; and in more than one Hebrew codex the proper character is restored, the *lamed* being again converted into a *resh*.

Of עיש, or as it is written chap. ix. 9. עש (Aish), there seems to be no doubt; almost every interpreter and commentator having referred it to the star Arcturus, in the constellation Bootes. It is supposed to be the nearest visible star in the northern hemisphere; and the expression "Arcturus with his sons," being hence understood as poetically descriptive of the northern hemisphere itself, (the only part of the heavens surveyed by the inhabitants of Idumæa,) it forms as beautiful a contrast with Mazaroth or the Zodiac, as Chimah forms with Chesil.

The latter clause in v. 12, is rendered in our bible version, "and tread down the wicked in their place." This is borrowed from St. Jerom; "et contere im-

Turn the broad heav'ns, and pour, through countless worlds,
Th' etherial fire that feeds their vital throngs?
Felt every moment, felt in every place.
Who form the louring clouds? the light'ning dart,
And roll the clam'rous thunder, oft in twain
Rending the concave?—or, full deep retir'd,
Who point, in secret, the mysterious shaft
That, while the guilty triumphs, prostrates stern
The fairest forms of innocence and worth?

Long after the wide world had ris'n, the sun
Shot his young beams, and earth and sea rejoic'd
In infant being—still primordial seeds,
From the vast compass of th' ENTIRE, conjoin'd;
Conjoin'd from ev'ry part; hence earth and main
Increas'd; hence the broad mansions of the heav'ns
Spread wider; and th' etherial dome was fill'd
With new-born air; for all, harmonious, blend
Kinds with their kinds, and thence those kinds augment.
Earth from the seeds of earth, from fiery, fire,

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pios in loco suo," but affords no very clear or definite idea; nor has the original been uniformly understood. Hence Pagninus renders it "contere impios *sub te*:" and Tyndall, who follows Pagninus literally, "treade all the ungodly under thy fete." While Schultens renders it sub sese, "under themselves." I believe I have given the real meaning, "with their own arms," or, "according to their own devices."

I cannot but conceive that Thomson had this very passage of Lucretius in his eye, when he wrote the following verses, which may be considered as an answer to the poet's sublime inquiries. It is in his hymn to the Deity.

But wandering oft with rude, unconscious gaze,
Man *marks not* THEE, *marks not the mighty hand*
That, ever busy, wheels the silent spheres;
Works in the secret deep; shoots steaming thence
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the spring;
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day;
Feeds every creature; hurls the tempest forth.—

Crescit; et ignem ignes procudunt, ætheraque æther:
Denique, ad extremum crescundi perfica finem
Omnia perduxit rerum Natura creatrix;
Ut fit, ubei nihilo jam plus est, quod datur intra
Vitaleis venas, quam quod fluit, atque recedit.
Omnibus hiis ætas debet consistere rebus;
Heic, Natura suis refrenat viribus auctum.
Nam, quæquomque vides hilare grandescere ad auctum,
Paullatimque gradus ætatis scandere adultæ,
Plura sibi adsumunt, quam de se corpora mittunt;
Dum facile in venas cibus omneis inditur, et dum
Non ita sunt late disparsa, ut multa remittant,
Et plus dispendii faciant, quam vescitur ætas.
Nam certe fluere atque recedere corpora rebus

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Ver. 1135 *For all with gradual growth that swells, and thus*
*Climbs, by degrees, the scale of life adult,* &c.] I have before had occasion to notice, in note on ver. 544, of the present book, that, upon the Epicurean theory, the world itself was regarded as an immense though disorganized system, and analogically compared, on account of many of its powers, to the system of animals themselves. Yet we must not conceive, from the verses before us, or any other, in which the same comparison or allegory is pursued, that Epicurus ever conceived the system of the world to be an animal in its own frame, or in any way endowed with perceptions or ideas. This, indeed, was the express creed of many of the Grecian schools, but it was always strenuously opposed by Epicurus himself. Thus, Xenophanes, the founder of the Eleatic sect, asserted, that God and the world are one and the same thing; and that whatever exists is an individual homogeneous being. Thus too, Pythagoras and Plato speak in almost the same terms of the universal spirit, while the Stoics advance the same of the soul of the world, the *spiritus intus*, by which all nature exists, and is supported. And when, in modern times, Spinoza informs us, that there is no difference of substances; that the whole, and every part of the material world, is a being necessarily existent, and that God himself is the universe—he does not essentially differ from the Stoics, from Pythagoras, or Plato. It is against all such systems as these, however, whether ancient or modern, that the Epicurean theory is immediately directed. With respect to the popular mythology of his countrymen, Lucretius is perpetually protesting against, and even, at times, deriding their credulity as to any divine power possessed by the earth, the main, or the stars: asserting, that if the multitude

Air from aërial, from the dewy, dew:
Till all-prolific Nature rears at length
To full perfection the vast frame of things,
And the gorg'd system can no more absorb
Than what flies casual from th' external pores.
Then boasts the whole completion; Nature, then,
Restrains all progress, every power matur'd.
For all with gradual growth that swells, and thus
Climbs, by degrees, the scale of life adult,
Far less emits than what its frame receives.
Wide through the system flows the genial food
Tow'rds every part disperst: yet not so wide
That much transudes external, and the day
Thus loses larger than the day digests.
For still, though much evanish, ampler still

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chuse, allegorically, to attribute the names of Cybele, or mother of the Gods, of Neptune, Jupiter, Apollo, and Diana, to the different elements and heavenly bodies, they should still remember, that the whole is fiction, and that, in themselves, these substances possess no sensation whatsoever. See ver. 663, and following, of the present book. While he reminds the philosophers more particularly, who, in different modes, attached the idea of animation and divinity to these material bodies, that, so far from being entitled to celestial honours, they

Full proof exhibit, rather, how devoid
Of vital action matter may exist:
And that not every compound frame alike
Boasts the high power of intellect and mind.

He tells them, expressly, that it is only from a peculiarly organized state of matter, sensation, and thought, can ever ensue; and that even these qualities do not equally pervade the whole system, when thus organized, but are rather confined to the bosom alone. See Book V. v. 144.

Since e'en in body then the soul and mind
Are fixt thus definite, we amply prove
That out of body, and a reasoning frame
In putrid glebes of earth or solar fire
In air or water, sense can never dwell.
And hence these ne'er divinity can boast,
Since e'en devoid of animated life.

When Lucretius, therefore, as in the present instance, applies, to the general frame of the earth, terms which more peculiarly belong to the frame of animal life, it is obvious, that he only applies them metaphorically: and that he means to describe her as a systematic, but not a sentient being.

Multa, manus dandum est; sed plura adcedere debent,
Donec alescundi summum tetigere cacumen.
Inde minutatim vireis et robur adultum
Frangit, et in partem pejorem liquitur, ætas.
Quippe et enim, quanto est res amplior, augmine adempto,
Et, quo latior est, in cunctas undique parteis
Plura modo dispargit, et a se corpora mittit;
Nec facile in venas cibus omnis diditur ei;
Nec satis est, pro quam largos exæstuat æstus,
Unde queant tantum suboriri, ac subpeditare.
Jure igitur pereunt, quom rarefacta fluundo
Sunt; et, quom externis subcumbunt omnia plagis:
Quandoquidem grandi cibus ævo denique defit;
Nec tuditantia rem cessant extrinsecus ullam
Corpora confacere, et plagis infesta domare.

Sic igitur magni quoque circum mœnia mundi
Expugnata dabunt labem, putreisque ruinas.
Omnia debet enim cibus integrare novando,
Et fulcire cibus; cibus omnia subtentare.
Nequidquam; quoniam nec venæ perpetiuntur
Quod satis est, neque, quantum opus est, natura ministrat.
Jamque adeo fracta est ætas; ecfetaque tellus
Vix animalia parva creat, quæ cuncta creavit
Secla, deditque ferarum ingentia corpora partu.

The nutriment that spreads, till the full form
Gains by degrees, its point of perfect pow'r.—
Then back, by gradual march, its strength declines,
Its fond perfection; and, from day to day,
Melts all its vigour.—This the ceaseless course
Of things created. But those chief, with speed,
Waste into nought that boast a bulk immense;
Since wider, here, the surface whence, each hour,
Flies off the light effluvium, nor with ease
Winds the fresh food through all the mighty mass,
By ceaseless strife exhausted, and a store
Asking far ampler than the store receiv'd.
Thus all must perish, unsupply'd within,
And, from without, by blows tumultuous urg'd;
Blows that, resistless, from whate'er adjoins,
Ply their full vigour till the victim yields.
Thus shall the world's wide walls hereafter sink
In boundless ruins: thus, though yet sustain'd
By food appropriate, and preserv'd entire.
For not for ever will her powers digest
The due recruit, nor Nature's hand supply.—

E'en now her glory fades, and the faint earth,
That erst uprear'd such giant forms of life
In ev'ry class profuse,—scarce now protrudes,

Haud, ut opinor, enim mortalia secla superne
Aurea de cœlo demisit funis in arva;
Nec mare, nec fluctus, plangentes saxa, crearunt;
Sed genuit tellus eadem, quæ nunc alit ex se. 1155

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Ver. 1168. *For deem not thou some golden chain from heav'n*
*Each tribe conducted down to realms below;*—] Most of my readers must be apprized that the poet, in these verses, refers to the chain which Homer has described in his Iliad, as connecting the earth with the heavens, and from which gods and men are alike suspended:

Σειρην χρυσειην εξ ουρανοθεν κρεμασαντες·
Παντες δ' εξαπτεσθε θεοι παντες θεαιναι. Θ. v. 18.

It is generally conjectured by the critics, however, that the terms σειρην χρυσειην, "the golden chain," are here only employed metaphorically. Plato, therefore, conceived, that under this figure the poet meaned to represent the sun, whose animating influence, as he travels through the ecliptic, connects and binds the whole system together: while Macrobius asserts it to typify the uninterrupted chain of causes and effects which are continually linked together throughout the universe. In this last sense, Pope himself appears to have understood it, if we may judge from the parallel passage in his translation, which is rather indeed a paraphrase than a literal version; not a syllable of the last of the two following lines being written by Homer himself, excepting the word heaven:

Let down our golden everlasting chain,
*Whose strong embrace holds heaven, and earth, and main.* Ver. 25.

Milton, however, has clearly conceived the description of Homer in its literal sense, as Lucretius had done before him. For, with a manifest reference to the passage before us, he represents Satan as looking towards the eternal throne, and beholding

——fast by, *hanging on a golden chain,*
*This pendent world.* Par. Lost, ii. 1051.

And it is an extraordinary fact, that many of the modern Greeks, in the Archipelago, and all the Turks, from the Mufti to the peasant, still literally believe that the earth, as well as the fixed stars, are suspended from the seven heavens, of which they conceive the etherial regions consist, by massy and everlasting chains. They likewise conceive, according to the account given us by Mr. Eton, in his "Survey of the Turkish empire," that the sun is a vast ball of culinary fire, about as large as the whole Ottoman province, and that the eclipses of the moon are occasioned by a great dragon's attempting to devour this luminary.

The chain referred to by Lucretius, which reached from heaven to earth, and conducted, according to Homer, the race of gods, as well as the progenitors of mankind, from the former to the latter, bears a striking resemblance to the vision of the patriarch Jacob in his journey to Padan-aram; "And he dreamed, and behold! a ladder set from the earth; and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold! the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Gen. xxviii. 12.

Ver. 1170. *Nor from the boist'rous billows of the main*
*That mortals sprung:* ——] Lambinus conjectures that, in writing these verses, Lucretius had in his mind that beautiful passage in the Iliad, in which Patroclus upbraids Achilles on account of his stern resentment against Agamemnon, and his obstinate determination, not to engage any more in the

With utmost toil, a scant, and puny race.
For deem not thou some golden chain from heav'n
Each tribe conducted down to realms below;
Nor from the boist'rous billows of the main
That mortals sprung: earth from herself produc'd
The various ranks that still herself sustains.

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Trojan contest, although the Greeks were at this moment discomfited, and on the point of ruin. "It was impossible for thee," says he, "to have sprung from Thetis and the noble Peleus, but rather,

Some rugged rock's hard entrails gave thee form,
And raging seas produc'd thee in a storm;—
So rough thy manners. Pope.

γλαυκη δε σε τικτε θαλασσα
Πετραι τ' ηλιβατοι, ὁτι τοι νοος εστιν απηνης. Il. Π. v. 34.

A conception which Virgil has imitated with much felicity in his Æneid, Book IV. v. 365.

Frachetta, however, in his Italian exposition, as well as our own learned countryman Mr. Wakefield, has a different conjecture, and supposes the poet to refer to the philosophic system of Thales, who maintained that all things were produced from water: of which system, as well as of our poet's opposition to it, some account has already been given in Book I. ver. 785, and the note belonging to it.

These conjectures are both ingenious and elegant, but to me they are not sufficiently satisfactory. As to the former, no one in the time of Lucretius, or indeed, at any other time, could possibly believe that Homer meaned to represent Achilles as having actually arisen from the stormy sea: and to suppose, therefore, the present verses designed to resist such an opinion, is to suppose them designed to fight with the air, and to resist an opinion that never was entertained. The latter conjecture is entitled to superior attention; but no reason is offered by the learned commentators, and I suspect none can be offered, why the poet should advert once more to this opinion of Thales, rather than to those of Heraclitus, Anaximenes, Oenopides, or any other philosophers, whose systems our poet has equally before discussed, and endeavoured to subvert.

Following up the popular mythology to which he manifestly adverts, in his first instance, of a *golden chain*, he much rather appears to me to have that part of the same mythology in view which represents the gods at large, the creators or progenitors of mankind, and consequently mankind themselves, as originally produced from this element: an opinion which we know was held, from the following address of Juno to Venus:

Ειμι γαρ οψομενη πολυφορβου πειρατα γαιης
Ὠκεανον τε θεων γενεσιν, και μητερα Τηθυν,
Ὁι μ' εν σφοισι δομοισιν ευστεφον ηδ' ατιταλλον.
Il. Ξ. 201.

For lo! I haste to those remote abodes,
Where the *great parents*, sacred source of gods,
*Ocean and Tethys*, their old empire keep,
On the last limits of the land and deep.
In their kind arms my tender years were pass'd.
Pope.

Or, which is nearly the same thing, Lucretius may, in these verses, allude to the birth of Venus individually: Venus, who was the immediate parent of the Roman people, and who, with more appropriation than any of the deities besides, may have been said, upon the vulgar mythology of the day, to have arisen from the ocean, the *fluctus plangentes saxa*, "the boisterous billows of the main," as he expresses himself in the very passage under consideration: this goddess, who was the life of all life, and the delight of gods and men: under all which characters our poet has represented her in his invocation at the opening of the first book.

Præterea, nitidas fruges, vinetaque læta,
Sponte suâ primum mortalibus ipsa creavit;

In reality, the two doctrines here referred to, of the origin of man from the sun, or the etherial heavens, and from water, are parts of an almost universal mythology, and form two of the grand pivots on which nearly every system of ancient idolatry appears to have turned. Our poet refers to them again, in Book V. 801, and almost in the same words.

It has been the object of Mr. Bryant's literary labours, to trace these doctrines to their fountain-head; and though his system seems, in many places, to require foundation, and to be too extravagant in its etymologies, it applies so ingeniously, both to the records and traditions of the most ancient times, and is so truly comprehensive and pertinent, that the reader will perhaps thank me for offering, in the present place, some analysis of it, as since enlarged and attempted to be confirmed by other writers.

These gentlemen begin with supposing, that the mythology of all nations, ancient or modern, ascends no higher than the period of the deluge; and that, whatever conceptions the Pagan world may have entertained of an ante-diluvian existence, such as those of a paradise, and a golden age, such conceptions are little more than mere isolated traditions, unconnected with the mythologic systems which were afterwards invented and multiplied. It is generally conjectured, upon this theory, that the first object of idolatrous deification after the flood, was the sun; that every species of Pagan theology has originated from solar worship; and that the name of almost every deity and fabulous hero of the Oriental world, as well as of those imported thence into Greece, is referable to the sun himself, or to some rite or ceremony appertaining to solar worship. Such is the conjecture generally entertained upon this theory, and which was contended for by Mr. Bryant himself: but there are others of the same school, who do not contemplate the worship of the sun as the most ancient species of idolatry, nor that from which every mythologic fable has originated. The mythology of the whole Pagan world is, by such inquirers, resolved into three grand systems of idolatry, each of nearly equal date, and all intertwining and combining with each other in every possibility of variety—the worship of the Ark—the worship of the Serpent,—and the worship of the Sun. Of these, the Arkite idolatry is conceived to be, in some measure, the most ancient; then the institution of Serpent or Ophite worship; and lastly, that of the Sun.

On the fall of the flood, and the resting of the ark upon mount Ararat, the vessel that had preserved the survivors of the human race from the destruction that prevailed around them, and the patriarch who had contrived and guided this wonderful machine over the shoreless ocean, were at first contemplated with gratitude and reverence: and when idolatry, or the worship of sensible images began, in a generation or two afterwards, to supersede the pure and spiritual worship of the Creator, both were deified, and the system of arkite idolatry commenced. Noah was regarded as a god, and the vessel in whose capacious womb the patriarch himself, with his family, and all that appertained to his family, was preserved, as a goddess, and the common parent of all things. Hence the origin of the fable of Venus, or the common parent of all things, rising from the flood; hence she acquired the name of Δημητης, *(Demeter,)* or, according to the Chaldeans, Da-Mater, which is literally "the Mother" of Gods and men; a term, undoubtedly, long afterwards applied, under another system, both to Ceres and the Earth, but which, on its first invention, was the peculiar appellation of Venus, or the Egyptian Aphrodite. From the same historic fact we trace, too, the origin of the fable of the great mundane egg floating on the surface of the mighty waters, and containing, within itself, the rudiments of the future world. Hence, again, the origin of the worship of Isis and Osiris, and the ceremony among the Egyptians of the mystical enshrinement of the latter, a mere personification of Noah, in an ark or vessel, which was conveyed twice a year with great pomp and splendour through the public streets, and amidst the adoring multitude, under the name of the former. Hence, the Xuth, Zuth, or

Then, too, spontaneous, from the soil she rear'd
Those luscious fruits, those vines that gladden life ;

Oannes, the chief god of the Babylonians and Chaldeans, and the Dagon of the Canaanites, are often represented with the body of a man, and the tail of a fish ; a figure precisely similar to that which the Hindus bestow upon their own deity Veeshna, during his incarnation, which comprizes the first avater of their chronology.

The *form* of the ark was a source of additional idolatry, and laid the foundation for worshipping almost every thing that was possest of a circular, or crescent shape. Hence, the adoration paid to the moon, or to Venus Demeter, under the appellation of Diana ; hence the representation of Isis, the Venus Demeter of Egypt, with a crescent upon her head, and the reverence on her account universally paid to the cow, as well as the apis, or bull, both which animals, from the crescent curvature of their horns, were deemed sacred to herself.

The *element* on which the ark floated, as well as the form of the ark itself, was also an object of idolatrous veneration ; and when, after the dispersion of the Cushites, in consequence of their idolatry on the plains of Shinar, one branch of them travelled towards Egypt, and another towards Hindu, they equally carried with them the worship of water, and transferred the rites to which they had been accustomed, to the Nile and the Ganges. They regarded the annual inundation of these rivers as a type of the universal deluge ; and the fertility which ensued upon their subsiding, as an emblem of the renewal of the world ; and were punctilious in their devotions to these extraordinary streams, as well on their rise as their fall. From the Nile, the Indus, and the Ganges, this river-worship was propagated to other streams, till, under the creative imagination of the Greeks, the minutest rill was supposed to be an object of divine adoration, and to be actuated by a peculiar genius, or godhead. Hence too, among the Egyptians more especially, the veneration that was paid to the Ibis, which is only another name for the ark, and which was an *aquatic* fowl of the crane kind, highly useful among themselves from its destroying locusts, canker-worms, serpents, and other noxious animals, with which their country was infested.

This deification of the ark and its builder, as well as the element that sustained them both, has enriched the vocabulary of almost every mythology, but particularly that of Greece, with a vast variety of terms, as well as laid the foundation for a long catalogue of proper names of the most celebrated persons and places. Among the Chaldeans, there were two terms more particularly employed to signify an ark, or water-vessel, and these are Erech and Men : from the former, or Erech, are derived Erecca, Arecca, Argo, Argos, Arcas, Arcadia, Archon, and all their infinitude of compounds : while the Chaldaic radical itself is still retained among the Northern nations in the term Erich, Henric, Henricus ; and affords ourselves, as well as many other European tribes, a basis for the terms arc, a segment of a circle, being the form of the vessel fabricated by Noah, and ark, the vessel itself. From the latter appellation, Men, are deduced Menes, Menu, Minos, Manes, Meon, and Moon ; this last term, like the word arc, alluding to the construction of the vessel, and, in the first instance, applied to this planet in her crescent form alone.

Among the ancient Egyptians, with whom one branch of the family of Ham settled almost immediately after their dispersion from Babylon, occupying the valley, which, from their own family name, Cushites, or descendants of Chus, was denominated Cushen, or Goshen—the term for an ark, or water-vessel, was ⲭⲓⲡ (Hip), and this term seems to have been also immediately impressed into the sacred service of arkite mythology. The holy appellation, hip, ⲭⲓⲡ, or ark, was applied to the water-fowl, most useful to these people, which was, in consequence, denominated Hibis, or Ibis. The Aphrodite, Venus Demeter, or mother of gods and men, was denominated Hippodamia : and in Arcadia there was an annual festival, in honour of Neptune, who was no other than the Egyptian Osyris, or Noah sailing over the world of waters in the sacred hip, or ark, denominated

Ipsa dedit dulceis fetus per pabula læta:
Quæ nunc vix nostro grandescunt aucta labore;

Hippocratia: whence, according to Hesychius, Hip, Hippa, Hippia, Hippos, are synonymous with Αργος, which, as just observed, is obviously derived from the Babylonian Erech, and is, altogether, parallel with the Egyptian Hip. Even in the Chaldaic vocabulary itself, we meet with Barsippa, which is generally interpreted a barge, ship, or ark, but which, more accurately, means the "son, or offspring of Ippa," or the ark, and may be easily made to apply to Noah, or any of his family, who were preserved in the maternal womb of this buoyant machine. From ϩ,ιπ the Greeks derived their Ἵππος, and a vast variety of modern languages, a term of similar import: but without pursuing such deductions any farther in the present case, I shall refer the reader to the note on B. iii. 1048, where the same subject is resumed upon another occasion. I shall here only observe, that the Egyptian month, in which the Nile began to rise, and the procession of the sacred ark, or hip, of Isis to be exhibited, which corresponds with the 25th of our June, and constitutes the eleventh month in their calendar, was, in consequence, denominated ϩιθιπ or επιπι which is only a duplication of the radical ϩ,ιπ, omitting the aspirate; and, as this radical was applied to *sacred* purposes, may be translated, consistently with Oriental costume, "the most sacred month, or season."

The Babylonians appear also to have had another word significative of an ark, which was Bad, or Boud, and hence, says Mr. Alwood, the ancient (Βουτος) Boutus, which was sacred to Isis, or Aphrodite, and means no other than the city of the Bout, boat, or ark. Our own term *boat*, he derives from this radical, and perhaps the words *bout*, and *about*, which imply a turning round, revolution, or circle, may, like the word arc, on which I have commented already, be derived from the crescent form of this machine. Probably, also, the term (Βοτρυς) Botrys, a city of Phœnicia, may be indebted to the same origin. But this Bout, Hip, or Ark, was, as I have already observed, deified and worshipped as the great origin of all things: and may we not hence derive the Boodh or divinity of the Hindus and Birmans, the Booden of the Ceylonese, and the Oden or Woden of the Goths; for the Boodh of Hindu is the Dies Mercurii, Wednesday, or Wodens-day of modern Europe? This divinity of the Hindus is, by the Siamese, denominated Pooth, or Pood, and by the vulgar Poo: whence, probably, again, the Chinese Fo, or Foe: but the Siamese denominate their own deity Gautma, or Gaudma, terms which, nevertheless, originate from the common radical Boodh, or Bout, and which not only serves as a basis for the Siamese Gautma, but in all probability for the German Got, and our own English terms God and good. In reality, a very little analytical examination will prove that almost all the names for the Supreme Being, both in ancient and modern times, may be traced to a Chaldaic origin, and had an embryon existence in Babylonia, prior to the destruction of Babel, and the dispersion of the sons of Ham towards Egypt and Hindustan.

Those I have already enumerated arise from the name of the ark, or vessel itself, in which the great progenitors of mankind were preserved in the midst of the unbounded deluge, and which was afterwards deified and admitted to divine rites. Yet divine rites were not only bestowed, in the idolatry of succeeding ages, upon the ark itself, but, as already observed, upon the builder of the ark, upon the fabricator, as well as the fabric. Noah, among the Chaldeans, passes under the appellation of Thoth, Theut, or Theuth, or, as it is written by Herodotus, Xuth: in the idolatry of Babylon, he was deified as the supreme god, the origin of all things, "the father of gods and men." Hence, Theut, or Tuisto, is a father or progenitor in old German, even to the present day: hence the Taautus of Phœnicia, and the Teutates of the Celts. Noah, thus deified, became the chief divinity of Greece and Rome: from Theuth, or Xuth, they obtained Zeus (Ζευς) or Jupiter; from Thoth, Theos (Θεος), Dios (Διος), and Deus: from Zeus (Ζευς) Zea (Ζεα), which, by an easy commutability of gender, was, as Hesychius informs us, a title for Venus,

And crown'd with pasture, and with glossy corn, 1175
Those fields where man now toils almost in vain :

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or Aphrodite Demeter, under the character of Diana. The word Dios is still the common term for God in the Spanish language ; and hence the Italian Dio, and the French Dieu.

From the proper term Noah, the builder of the ship, the Greeks also derived the substantive (Ναυς) Naus, the "ship" itself, and Danäus or Da-Näus which is literally "the ship or ark ;" and the entire fable respecting whom, including the fifty sons and daughters, or priests and priestesses, that were united together, and the leaky vessel or ark that the latter were sentenced to pour water into for ever, originates, as is shewn in the note on Book iii. 1046, from the arkite idolatry of Babylonia, or perhaps, more immediately from the religious rites of Isis and Osiris, which constitute but a type of the former. From the Greek term Naus (Ναυς) the Latins derive their navis; and it is curious to observe, that almost every modern language of Europe has acquired its name for a ship or water-vessel, either from Noah the builder of the vessel, or the hip or ark he constructed, from the fabricator or the fabric itself.

The deification which the idolatrous descendants of Ham conferred upon their common progenitor Noah, they also conferred upon Ham himself, and hence he too was regarded as the Thoth, Xuth, Zeus, or supreme god of his people. Surveying no object around them so powerful and glorious as the sun, these deities were next compared to the sun, and deduced their titles from him. Like the present princes of the East, they were denominated lords of the sun, the moon, or the stars, and often denominated the sun himself. Hence Ammon or Hammon, (Ham-On,) is literally Ham the Sun ; the shrine of whom, under the additional title of Jupiter Ammon, which was situated in the desart bordering upon Egypt, was the most renowned of any in antiquity. It is probable that the origin of all solar worship proceeded from such an appropriation of titles, and it easily accounts for that intermixture of terms which we meet with in many ancient names, obviously of Chaldaic origin, and the combination, and frequently the confusion, of these different systems of idolatry. Thuth and Ham, in consequence hereof, were regarded as the sun himself, or the pure etherial heavens in which he resides, and whence he distributes his blessings; hence from Thuth, Thoth, or Thor, we derive (Ai-Thor) Æther, the region or temple of Thor, the Sun, or Jupiter: and hence Jupiter and Æther, amidst the Greeks and Romans, were convertible terms. But the supreme origin of all things, as I have before observed, was also represented, in arkite idolatry, under the feminine gender, as the Aphrodite, Venus Demeter, or common mother of all created beings. And hence the term Ai-Thor was also applied to this female divinity, who was denominated by the Egyptians ΗΑΘΩΡ and ΗΑΘΥΡ (Athor): whence ΠΘΩΡ ΘΒΑΚΙ the city of Venus or Athor ; the Αταρβηχις of Herodotus, lib. ii. 41 ; and Thyatira in Lybia. And whence, in all probability, the Thor or divinity of the Goths. The Gothic Thor, however, was a masculine deity, and of course synonymous with the Xuth of the Chaldeans, and the Xuth-Pi-Ait-Or, or, with a Doric contraction, Xu'-P'-Ait-Or (Jupiter, the place or region of inspiration of Xuth the Sun) of the Romans ;—hence, in hebdomenal time, the Dies Jovis and Thursday or Thor's-day are appropriated to the same period. Xuth, according to Herodotus, vii. 94, had a son whose name was (Ιων) Ion, and the Ionians were denominated from him : but the true interpretation of the term Ion is "a dove :" and it is hence obvious, observes Mr. Alwood, whence this fable originates, the Ion or Dove having been put forth from the ark by Xuth in quest of dry land. Whence also the appropriation of this bird to Venus, who was a symbol of the ark deified under a female form. Herodotus tells us in the same passage, that the inhabitants of Achæa, prior to the arrival of Danäus and Xuthus, were called Pelasgi Ægiales, but that on this event they changed their name to Ionians.

From the idolatry of the Babylonians, thus transferred to the sun and the starry firmament, proceeded

Conterimusque boves, et vireis agricolarum 1160
Confacimus, seris vix arvis subpeditatei :

the worship of fire, which was justly supposed to be representative of the sun ; a system of religion which, prior to the introduction of the Christian, pervaded almost all nations, and which is still predominant in South America, as well as in many other regions. The temples dedicated to the sun, or the deity of fire, were each of them denominated a Pyramid, which is almost literally Pi-Ur-Am-Ait, and with the contraction P'-Ur-Am-Ait—"the place of inspiration of the radiant Ham," or "Ham the Sun." They were built upon one model, and it is easy to perceive that this model was deduced from the figure of an ascending flame of fire, which originates with a broad basis, and terminates in a pointed apex. Egypt and Hindu abound with buildings of this description, and the pagodas of China do not essentially vary from it. Hercules, who is a deity of high antiquity among the eastern nations, and in reality is only another name for Jupiter or Ham, is denominated from radicals altogether analogous with the term Pyramid ; for it is literally Ur-Cal-Es, "an eminence dedicated to the effulgence of fire ;" or rather, "an ascending flame of fire." And the descendants of the Heraclidæ in India are to this day denominated Surya-Bans, which is literally "children of the Sun." This appellation indeed, children or descendants of the Sun, of Xuth, or Jupiter Ammon, was in a more restricted sense conferred upon the heroes of antiquity alone ; but in a more general sense upon all mankind, since Hammon, or Ham the Sun, was worshipped as the common father of all. And hence the fable alluded to by our poet, in the verse immediately foregoing, of mankind having descended from heaven or the sun, by means of a golden chain appended from the etherial regions for this purpose.

While the Sun was thus at first admired and afterwards worshipped for his splendour and power, the serpent also, in the very same period of the world, attracted an equal degree of notice as an emblem of providence and protection ; and was supposed in consequence hereof to possess, in a superior degree, the qualities of wisdom and prudence. The beautiful and variegated scales of this reptile seem at first to have engaged the attention and admiration of mankind ; and its power of enveloping its food or prey in a complete circle of defence, to have laid the foundation for its moral character, and the reverence which was paid to it afterwards. As an emblem of divine protection, we find it therefore hieroglyphically represented as encompassing the great mundane egg, while floating on the waters of the deluge, both in Egyptian and Hindu memorials. The serpent in some hieroglyphics, and particularly on the walls of the great temple of ancient Thebes, is exhibited with wings, or as a draco volans ; and when sustaining this figure, the same emblem of providential protection is continued, by its hovering with its wings extended over the egg or ark that is represented as floating below. The Egyptians denominated the serpent (צפע) hoph, whence the Greeks derive their ὄφις. And when in process of time this reptile became deified, he was called Hob, Oub, or Ob-El, "the Serpent-God ;" and the temples or buildings erected to his worship, which instead of being cones, like the pyramid or temple of the Sun, were cylindrical, were each of them termed an Obelisk, Ob-El-Es-Ca, "a temple of the radiant or illustrious Serpent-God." From the name of this deity the Greeks derive their Pelops, P'-El-Ops, "the oracle of the Serpent-God ;" Pelope in Phrygia, Pelopia, Pelopea daughter of Thyestes son of Pelops, and a vast variety of other names. Pelops, in Diod. Sic. i. 317, edit. Wessel, is said to have been enamoured of Hippodamia, the beautiful daughter of Ænomäus, and to have put all his rivals to death in order to obtain her ; which he eventually accomplished. Who does not see in this fable, and under these names, an emblem of the ark or Hippa, built or created by Noah, and borne up and protected by a serpent or dragon, either hovering over it or coiled around it, together with its safe deposit on mount Ararat, and the triumph of the Serpent or Ophite worship ? Ænomäus is Ain-Am-Ees, "the fountains of Ham the Sun ;" and Hippodamia, Hip-Ad-Am,

Where faints the steer, the ploughman faints fatigu'd,
And the keen share so wastes, mechanic art

"the ark of the supreme Ham." Ænomäus is, therefore, only another name for Ham, or Noah the progenitor of Ham: and Hippodamia was frequently an appellation for Aphrodite, Venus, or the fabric which Ham and his father constructed; and which may, with the utmost propriety, be entitled the offspring of either of them. The city of Pelopia mentioned above, was the same with Thyatira, which, as previously noticed, was sacred also to Venus.

I have already observed, that between the arkite and solar worship there subsisted the closest degree of intermixture and combination; and that, from the origin of solar worship itself, this must necessarily have been the case. But from the observations immediately preceding, it evidently appears that at least an equal degree of intimacy must have taken place between the arkite and the ophite idolatry; the serpent being regarded merely as the protecting power of the ark or erech, enveloping it with its pliant volumes, or hovering over it with its guardian wings. Yet, from the lustre and coruscation of its scales, and, more particularly still, from its occasionally forming the figure of a complete circle, it became also a type of the Sun himself, and was not unfrequently regarded as such. Hence the word Europa, is by analysis Eur-Op, or Eur-Oph, "the Serpent of the Sun." And hence we obviously account for the connexion, intertexture, and occasional confusion of these three distinct systems of idolatry, and not unfrequently trace a reference to all of them in the same proper names of cities or family. Thus Cecrops, king of Athens, means (Ca-Cur-Ops, and contractedly Ca-C'r-Ops,) "the temple of the Solar Ops," or, "the Serpent of the Sun." But Cecrops is feigned to have been the descendant of Erectheus, while Erectheus, on the contrary, is (Erech-Theus or Theut) "Theus the lord or chief of the erech or ark." In like manner I have observed, that Venus and Theut or Theus were the same deity, only with a different gender; yet one of the sacrifices offered to Venus was entitled (Ζακορια) Zacoria, and her priests were entitled (Ζακορoι) Zacori; but Zacoria and Zacori are obviously borrowed from Za-Cur, which radically means "the Sun," or, "the glorious Lord of day." From the Chaldaic term Cur, the Greeks derive their Κυριος, which was a title of honour, and Κρητη (the island of Crete), as well as Curium a town in Cyprus, both of which were sacred to Venus. From the same term, also, is derived the Κουρητες, Curetes, Cur-Ait-Es, ("the emanations of the Supreme Sun,") or priests of Jupiter, to whose office our poet has already alluded, ver. 614 of the present book. Hence Creas or Creasna, "the Sun," in the Erse tongue; Cheres in the Egyptian; Cores among the Persians; and Cora among the Peruvians. In like manner, Kircher applies the terms Baal and Bel, by which the idolatrous Canaanites designated their supreme deity, the Sun, to Venus, and represents him with his lower parts of the form of a fish: but Bel or Baal, being masculine, he is more properly Thoth, Oannes, or Noah. Yet Κυβελη (Cu-Bel, or "the temple of Bel") is an undoubted appellation of Venus in the character of Da-Meter, or "the great parent of all things."

From this ingenious theory, connected with a general survey of ancient history and mythology, on which I have dwelt the longer in an individual note, that I might bring the whole into one comprehensive point of view, it should seem that all the different systems of idolatry that have been exhibited in past, and are perhaps exhibiting in present ages, ramify from the three radical fountains of arkite, solar, and ophite worship; all of which were adopted at a very early period after the deluge, and were propagated over the globe, on the dispersion of the sons of Chus, in every different direction, after the ruin of their celebrated tower and city of Babel: and we see obviously from what quarter the two most popular opinions of the origin of mankind, here adverted to by our poet, were derived—to wit, their descent from the sun, or the etherial regions; and their creation from the waves of the ocean. They were also occasionally stated, and that too not upon philosophic principles, but mythological fable, to have

Usque adeo pereunt fetus, augentque labore!
Jamque, caput quassans, grandis subspirat arator

arisen from the earth; but this was by no means so general a belief as the two preceding, and was ordinarily confined to the Titans and giants, or to such deified heroes as, like Erechtheus, were immediately connected with the rites of Ceres, and the cultivation of corn. See on the former subject, note on Book I. 767; and on the latter, note on Book VI. v. 1.

I have asserted, that these three systems of idolatry, though in themselves distinct and separate, yet were perpetually blending and amalgamating: and I shall subjoin, as an additional proof of such assertion, that all the three types whence these idolatries originated, were equally admitted as emblems, though as nothing more, into the religion of the Jews. On the reverence which was paid by this people to the element of fire, I have already animadverted in the note on Book I. v. 693. It was in the character of a flaming pyramid or burning bush, that Jehovah appeared to Moses on mount Horeb, and to the Hebrews at large on the promulgation of the law from mount Sinai. The formation of a memorial ark was expressly commanded by God himself, on the establishment of the written law, and an express canon of ceremonies ordained on the occasion. And when this rebellious people were deservedly plagued, in their journey through the desert, with disease and mortality, from the bite of multitudes of venomous serpents sent among them for this purpose, the Almighty commanded them to erect a fiery serpent, upon a lofty pole or pillar, as an emblem of his providence and healing power, by looking towards which all who were diseased immediately became sound. Other literary observations, in connection with the same theory, the reader may find in the notes on Book I. 727. II. 601. 618. 643. Book III. 1048. Book IV. 1214. Book V. 24, and 1483, and Book VI. 1.

Ver. 1171. ——*earth from herself produc'd*
*The various ranks that still herself sustains.*] Homer, desirous of paying a compliment to the Athenians, thus represents Erectheus, the founder of this celebrated republic, as the immediate progeny of the earth, although suckled by Minerva;

Δημον Ερεχθηος μεγαλητορος, ὁν ποτ' Αθηνη
Θρεχε Διος θυγατηρ, τεκε δε ζειδος απουρα.

Il. B. 544.

Athens the fair, where great Erectheus sway'd,
That ow'd his nurture to the blue-ey'd maid;
But from the teeming furrow took his birth,
The mighty offspring of the fruitful Earth.

Pope.

Ovid, in the commencement of his Metamorphosis, appears to be doubtful whether, in the formation of man, he should incline to the system of Plato, or of Epicurus, and, in consequence, writes thus:

Natus homo est: sive hunc divino semine fecit
Ille opifex rerum, mundi melioris origo,
Sive recens tellus, seductaque nuper ab alto
Æthere.

Then man was made, whose animated frame
Or God inform'd with a celestial flame,
Or Earth from purer heav'n but lately freed.

Ver. 1173. *Then, too, spontaneous, from the soil she rear'd*
*Those luscious fruits, those vines*, &c.—] To the same effect, Ovid:

Ver erat æternum, placidique tepentibus auris
Mulcebant zephyri natos sine semine flores.
Mox etium fruges tellus inarata ferebat,
Nec renovatus ager gravidis canebat aristis.

Metam. Book I. v. 101.

The teeming earth, yet guiltless of the plough,
And unprovok'd, did fruitful stores allow.
The flowers unseen, in fields and meadows reign'd,
And western winds immortal spring maintain'd.
In following years the bearded corn ensu'd
From earth unask'd, nor was that earth renew'd.

Dryden.

Can scarce supply th' exhaustion:—such the call
For labour now, so foods forbear to rise. 1180
Thus musing, the rude husbandman shakes oft

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In a passage, predicting the return of these happy days, Virgil, as well as Ovid, has been indebted to our poet:

Molli paulatim flavescet campus aristâ,
Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva,
Et duræ quercus sudabunt roscida mella.
Ecl. IV. v. 28.

Pope's beautiful imitation of this passage, will serve as a version of it:

The swain, in barren deserts, with surprize,
Sees lillies spring, and sudden verdure rise;
And starts amidst the thirsty wilds to hear
New falls of water murmuring in his ear.
Messiah.

The opinion of a golden age, or anterior period of superior happiness, is common to most nations, and probably originated from different traditions concerning the Garden of Eden. The modern Bramins look back to such an epoch with as firm a belief in its existence as the ancient Greeks: and the Saturn of the latter is the Dushwanta of the former. There is a poem in Sanscrit with this title, or rather entitled, Dushwanta and Sacontala, which is said to be even older than the æra of Calidas, which thus refers to this age of consummate beatitude. "During the reign of Dushwanta, no one worked at the plough, or in the mines, because the earth yielded her riches spontaneously; nor any one offended against the law. As the people delighted in justice, so they obtained justice, and the object of their wishes. There was no fear of thieves, no dread of poverty, no apprehension of disease. The clouds rained in due season, the fruits were full of juice, and the earth abounded with herds, and flocks, and every precious thing." Oriental Repository, Vol. II.

An opinion, somewhat similar, is to be traced among most of the Christian fathers. St. Cyprian thus expresses himself, in an epistle to Demetrius: Scire debes jam mundum non illis viribus stare quibus prius steterat, &c. "Acquaint thyself with this fact, that the earth is not now possest of the same degree of vigour which she possest formerly. On this subject, although the Scriptures, and our most eminent divines, were silent, yet the world itself would speak, and even testify the cause of so woeful a change. We enjoy not in Winter the same abundance or quantity of showers for fecundating the scattered seeds which was formerly bestowed: we feel not in Summer the same quantity of heat for ripening the fruits of the earth. In the Spring itself we have less promise of plenty; and in the Autumn the trees and general herbage are less abundant. Even in the bowels of the earth, there are fewer fossils and precious stones: less silver and gold; for the metals themselves are diminishing, and their veins of ore are contracting daily. There are fewer harvest-men in the fields, fewer sailors on the ocean, fewer soldiers in the camp. There is less innocence in civil life; less justice in the municipal courts, less constancy in friendship, less skill in the arts, less discipline in our morals. All things, indeed, must diminish, as they necessarily hasten to decay, and will shortly attain their last hour of existence."

This is a dismal picture for succeeding generations to contemplate, and probably, the worthy father has a little too highly coloured it. But the principle advanced both by himself and Lucretius, so far as it relates to natural phænomena, is countenanced, I think, in some measure, as well by physical and philosophic views, as by divine revelation. Although not an animalized, homogeneous being, the earth is, at least, a systematized material substance; and it seems totally contrary to the nature of things, that a material substance of any kind should either continue for ever, or exist without gradual decay. Such gradual decay, indeed, is the common course of nature at large; for every thing, great or small, is by degrees dissolving into its original elements. Nor is this species of destruction confined to the globe we

Crebrius in cassum magnum cecidisse labores :
Et, quom tempora temporibus præsentia confert 1165

inhabit. Suns, and whole planetary systems, have already disappeared from their stations in the horizon, dissolved, perhaps, to primitive non-entity, or resorbed in the material and central mass of universal nature, from which they were at first projected, and new creations have been discovered in their stead. What is there then, in the system of the earth itself, to enable it to resist the common fate? Upon every analogy of reasoning, it also must eventually yield, and it is probably decaying at the present moment. The increasing ingenuity of man may enable it to produce the necessaries of life to the last period of its existence; but without such increase, either of toil or ingenuity, its growing defects would become daily more conspicuous. In what manner this existence is finally to terminate, is of little consequence; most probably, by the operation of fire, and long anterior to the period of the earth's total incapacity of production from any other cause. And such, indeed, is the opinion advanced by our poet himself in his fifth book. The elemental fire contained in its own central bowels, whether electric or culinary, is conceived, upon every geologic system, to be immense. Many philosophers of the first reputation in our own age, have calculated, that the great body of the earth derives, at least ten times as much heat from the extrication of these elemental and central fires, as it does from the operation of the sun. And the ravages the whole globe is sustaining from earthquakes and volcanoes, the sure and dreadful effects of such latent and most powerful causes operating upon confined gasses, and vast beds of combustible materials, are, in every respect, deeper and wider than those produced by any other cause. It is no improbable conjecture then to suppose, even prior to its total incapacity of production from mere age, that the immediate dissolution of the earth may be effected by the explosion of some immense and central volcano operating over every portion of the globe at the same moment, and perhaps reconverting it into the same species of comet which Buffon supposed it originally constituted. See note on Book I. 646.—It was from an explosion of this sort, occurring in the central and opake mass of universal nature, that Dr. Herschell conceives the earth originally, and indeed all the existent systems of the universe, were emitted. See note on Book I. 1112. And this idea of the dissolution of the earth, by a general conflagration, is corroborated by the express prophecies of the Scriptures, which inform us (2 Pet. cap. iii. v. 10—12.), that "the heavens shall be dissolved with fire, and shall pass away with a great noise: that the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." See note on Book V. ver. 425.

It may, perhaps, be observed, in reply to the idea of this gradual decay and final dissolution of the earth, that although all compound material bodies do suffer such gradual decay, and are continually changing, yet that the essential atoms of matter cannot be conceived to suffer any change; a fact, indeed, contended for by Epicureans themselves: and that as, according to another of their principles, the destruction of one substance is but the generation of a second, the great body of the earth itself must, at all times, have the same quantity, and the same unvaried quality of material atoms as the means of recruiting its different forms and phænomena; in consequence of which, that we have no reason to conceive that the great body of the earth either gradually is decaying, or ever can experience such a change as may produce its total dissolution; and that Epicurus reasoned inconclusively upon his own principles when he formed such an idea.—But Epicurus reasoned from the living fact itself, a foundation upon which all philosophy should be built, as far as the fact was capable of applying, and from a close and obvious analogy where the fact ceased. Whoever examines nature must allow, that there is a sufficient quantity of elemental atoms to recruit the individual system of every animal and vegetable, as well as the general orb of earth itself: but the individual systems of animals and vegetables are not recruited for ever. New

His weary head; his thriftless pains bewails,
Thriftless too sure: and, while his wand'ring thought

animals and new vegetables of the same orders and species, are continually springing up, it is true, and new worlds may, in like manner, be created from the ruins of the present. Why the individual systems of animals and vegetables are not suffered to be thus eternally recruited, we know not: but there is, through all creation, an express and determinate law of nature, or the God of nature, that this individual renewal of system shall not be perpetuated for ever. The Christian, indeed, looks forwards, with joyful hope, to a time when this law shall be done away: when "there shall be new heavens, and a new earth;" and "this mortal shall put on immortality:" and the principles of sound and genuine philosophy, as well as the veritable assurances of the sacred Scriptures, concur in justifying such an expectation. The former intimate to man, that such an event *may* occur; the latter, that it most decidedly *will*.

There is, I know, a school of philosophers in this country, as well as in France, who ridicule every idea of this sort; who, denying all evidence adduced from revelation, and confining themselves solely to the experienced train of events, the actual laws and phænomena of nature, strenuously contend, that there can be no such thing as a resurrection of the body. But what have these men of wisdom substituted in its stead? Why, truly, that nature, instead of degenerating, is becoming daily more kindly and prolific; and that the body itself, in its present mode of existence, is gradually attaining an increase of longevity, and will, in a few generations, acquire the possession of complete immortality: that man is becoming, and will become, more virtuous; that the universal passions of the soul are bending, by degrees, to the judgment and correction of the mind; that perpetual health will, in consequence, soon succeed to disease; tranquillity to war; the whole orb of earth be duly populated;—and there being no more necessity for the multiplication of the animal species, that the sexual organs themselves will gradually disappear, and vanish!!! And yet these are the men who, discarding every thing mysterious, or acquired by supernatural revelation, pretend, more than all others, to confine themselves to the experienced facts and events before them!!! But it is useless to pursue such fanciful and absurd speculations any farther. They are undermined by the very first principles on which such pretended sages affect to build this philosophic Babel: for what one law, or phænomenon of nature, can they conjure up, to countenance such unfounded and puerile assertions? Every mode and variety of life, virtuous and vicious, tranquil and tumultuous, temperate and luxurious, has been alternately resorted to; but man, in every instance, has still proved mortal. Every pretended nostrum and elixir, for the prolongation of existence, has been tried, and in many instances faithfully tried, according to the rules of the empirical prescriber, but all equally in vain. Yet these new and philosophic empirics boldly come forwards, and, though rigid adherents to the laws of nature, and the experienced train of events, without the adduction of any one fact, and in direct contradiction to nature herself, pretend to assert, that they have discovered this stupendous secret:—that life and immortality depend, or will a few ages hence depend, upon the mere volition of the mind: and that the man, who ardently desires to live, may, even in this world live for ever!! See Condorcet's Essaie sur le Progres de l'Esprit humain; and Mr. Godwin's Political Justice.

There is a greater degree of resemblance between these equalizing philosophers, and that sect of Christians, who are denominated *Millennarian*, than either are, perhaps, desirous of acknowledging. For interpreting in too literal a sense, a passage in the Revelations of St. John, these latter are looking forwards with holy hope, to a period in which righteousness and truth will prevail for a thousand years over the whole earth, to the utter exclusion of vice, error, and every mental and corporeal evil: a period in which the life of man will be elongated, and every one exist in the bonds of harmony and love. This belief, which was common in the first ages of the church, has never been without its adherents: and

Præteritis, laudat fortunas sæpe parentis.
Tristis item vetulæ vitis sator, [acta peragrans]
Temporis, incusat numen, cœlumque fatigat;
Et crepat, antiquum genus ut, pietate repletum,
Perfacile angustis tolerarit finibus ævom,
Quom minor esset agri multo modus ante viritim:
Nec tenet, omnia paullatim tabescere, et ire
Ad capulum, spatio ætatis defessa vetusto.

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if Origen opposed it successfully in his own era, our own countryman, Whiston, inculcated it so strenuously in his day, that even in the present, there are no small numbers of Christians who admit the doctrine into their creed. And for this, they have, at least, more reason than the philosophers, for maintaining their absurd and preposterous tenet. The former, although mistaken in their interpretation, actually make an appeal to an accredited prophecy: while the latter can make no appeal whatsoever: deserting revelation, they are totally opposed by the facts and experience of revolving ages. I ought not to omit, adding, in this place, that M. Kant appears, in some measure, inclined to this idea of a perpetual improvement and perfectibility. "Philosophy," says he, "has its millennium as well as Christianity, in which, philanthropy is to be developed in all its generous and extensive operations, and in which its fairest projects are to be realized. This millennium is daily approximating, and its arrival is accelerated by moral and intellectual discussions." See, on this subject, a small essay of the Professor's, imported by De Boffe, 1798, and entitled, Idée de qui pourrait être une Histoire universelle dans les Mains d'un Cosmopolit.

Ver. 1181. *Thus musing, the rude husbandman shakes oft*
*His weary head;*——] An action still frequent in the present day, and constantly indicative of sorrow, or some other evil. Virgil has copied the phrase in the following instance:

Tum *quassans caput*, hæc effudit pectore dicta:
Æn. vii. v. 292.

*Her head* then *shaking*, thus the goddess spoke.

Ver. 1186. *Then, luckless planter of degenerate vines!*
*His day he curses, then all heav'n he tires,*] In the manuscript copies in which the original of these two lines occur, they are so marred, and so differently writ-

Weighs, with the present, the fair times elaps'd,
Envies the lot the men of yore enjoy'd.
Then, luckless planter of degenerate vines!
His day he curses, then all heav'n he tires,
Mutt'ring that earlier times, though virtuous more,
Should, thus, have more been favour'd,—thus have rear'd
An ampler harvest e'en from narrower farms,—
Heedless that all things by degrees must fail,
Worn out by age, and doom'd to certain death.

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ten, that in almost every printed edition, the editor, not being able to comprehend their meaning, has omitted them altogether. For this reason, they are not to be found in any translation that I have ever met with, either English or foreign. Heinsius contends, they should be given thus: Lib. III. cap. 8.

Tristis item vetulæ vitis sator, atque victæ,
Temporis, incusat *nomen*, *seclum*que fatigat.

Then luckless planter of degenerate vines
The *world* he tires, and his own *name* abhors.

Mr. Wakefield's lection, the reader will perceive, is as follows:

Tristis, item, vetulæ vitis sator, (acta peragrans)
Temporis, incusat *numen*, *cælum*que fatigat.

In the translation I have relinquished, however, the phrase, acta peragrans, "*contemplating the past*," as not existing in the generality of the best editions and manuscript copies; but I have admitted the ingenious reading, and, in my opinion, very valuable emendation of *numen* for *nomen*, and *cælum* for *seclum*, inserted into the present edition of the original, upon the authority of many ancient copies.

The entire passage cannot, perhaps, but remind many of my readers of Hesiod's description of the fifth age of the world:

Μηνετ' επειτ' ωφειλον εγω πεμπτοισι μετειναι
Ανδρασιν, αλλ' η προσθε θανειν, η επετα γενεσθαι.
Νυν γαρ δη γενος εστι σιδηριον· ουδεποτ' ημαρ
Παυσονται καματου και οιζυος, ουδε τι νυκτωρ,
Φθειρομενοι· χαλεπας δε θεοι δωσουσι μεριμνας.

Oper. et Dier. l. 1.

O! might I ne'er this fifth rude age survey,
Posterior born, or hurried first away:
This age of iron toil, degenerate grown,
Where night and day man lives but to bemoan,
Fruitless to labour, and to sweat, in vain—
For such th' enormous ills the fates ordain.

THE

# NATURE OF THINGS.

## BOOK THE THIRD.

## ARGUMENT.

From the nature and properties of atoms, discussed in the two preceding books, the Poet advances to a more detailed account of their results under different states of combination and modification. The book opens with a panegyric upon Epicurus; and a brief sketch of its chief object, viz. to root from the heart that undue attachment to life, which is the source of many of the worst passions of the soul. Of the nature of the soul:—its chief residence in and about the heart; its general extension to the body at large; in what sense it may be said to differ from the mind, and in what to be synonymous with it. That the soul is altogether material, and compounded of different gases inhaled from the atmosphere: in consequence of its materiality, that it is mortal, and perishes with the body. The anxiety and terror of mankind upon contemplating the prospect of death, whether as a state of annihilation, or of future punishment. No truth in the popular mythological fables respecting a posterior state of torment;—and hence, the absurdity of any undue anxiety on either account. The best means of moderating such anxiety, and consequently, of giving to life its truest relish and enjoyment.

# *DE RERUM NATURA.*

## LIBER TERTIUS.

O! Tenebris tantis tam clarum extollere lumen
Qui primus potuisti, inlustrans conmoda vitæ,
Te sequor, o Graiæ gentis decus! inque tuis nunc
Ficta pedum pono pressis vestigia signis;
Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem,
Quod te imitare aveo. Quid enim contendat hirondo
Cycnis? aut quid nam tremulis facere artubus hædei

---

Ver. 1. *O glory of the Greeks! who first didst chace*
*The mind's dread darkness with celestial day,*]
In the following passage of Lope de Vega there is an apostrophe so closely resembling the present, as to give us the idea of a copy, whether the author intended it or not. It is intrinsically beautiful, and needs no apology for its citation:

O nueva luz! o claro sol! responde,
Del antiguo valor reliquias santas!
La escura noche que me vida esconde,
Ya que con rayos de oro te levantas,
Huya de mi, que con tu lumbre pura
Por medio de la muerte va segura.

HERMOSURA de ANGELICA, Cant. ix.

O glorious sun! O new resplendent light!
Remnant most saint of what was once ador'd—
The shades that wrap'd me deep in ten-fold night
Fly now thine orb its golden beams have pour'd.
Who boasts the guidance of a ray so pure
Through secret deaths may march, and dangers most obscure.

# *THE NATURE OF THINGS.*

## BOOK THE THIRD.

O Glory of the Greeks! who first didst chace
The mind's dread darkness with celestial day,
The worth illustrating of human life—
Thee, glad, I follow—with firm foot resolv'd
To tread the path imprinted by thy steps;
Not urg'd by competition, but, alone,
Studious thy toils to copy; for, in powers,
How can the swallow with the swan contend?

---

In the common editions of the original, half the spirit of this address is destroyed by making the first line commence thus: "*E* tenebris tantis."——The Bodleian and Cambridge copies, and one of the two Leyden MSS. formerly belonging to Isaac Vossius, write, "*A* tenebris tantis;"——which certainly offers no improvement. The Vienna copy, an ancient manuscript fragment in the same library, and the other MS. of Vossius, give us, as in the text, "*O!* tenebris tantis." Mr. Wakefield has judiciously availed himself of this animated variation, and no reader, I trust, will condemn me for following him in its selection.

Ver. 8. *How can the swallow with the swan contend?*] In adopting this antithesis, Lucretius appears to have had his eye directed to Theocritus: who, on the death of Daphnis, makes her lover exclaim:

Κηξ ορεων τοι σκωπες ανδρι γαρυσσανιο. Id. A. 136.

The mountain-howl with Philomel's sweet song
Shall now contend.

Creech, by some unaccountable error, has altered the term *swallow* to *larks*, and hereby destroyed the entire sense and beauty of the passage:

Consimile in cursu possint, et fortis equi vis ?
Tu, Pater! es rerum inventor; tu patria nobis
Subpeditas præcepta: tuis ex, inclute, chartis,
Floriferis ut apes in saltibus omnia limant,
Omnia nos itidem depascimur aurea dicta;
Aurea, perpetuâ semper dignissima vitâ.

——for how can *larks* oppose
The *vigorous* swan? they are unequal foes.

Admitting the feigned musical note of the *swan*, the *lark* might still vie with him; but the broken chirp of the swallow could have no such pretensions. It was, moreover, a very general belief among the multitude in Greece and Rome, that the swan, when dying, sang more melodiously than any bird; while the harsh and idle twittering of the swallow was held in the utmost contempt. Thus, Anacreon, addressing himself to the latter, inquires,

Τί σοι θέλεις ποιῆσαι,
Τί κωτίλη χελιδών. Ode 12.

Which Cowley has thus translated, or rather paraphrased:

Foolish prater! what dost thou
So early, at my window do,
With thy tuneless serenade?

And thus also Nicostratus:

Εἰ τὸ συνεχὲς καὶ πολλὰ καὶ ταχέως λαλεῖν
Ἦν τοῦ φρονεῖν παράσημον, αἱ χελιδόνες
Ἐλέγοντ' ἂν ἡμῶν σωφρονεστέραι πολύ.

If in prating from morning till night
A sign of our wisdom there be;
The swallows are wiser by right,
For they prattle much faster than we.

Moore.

Whilst such, on the contrary, was the high esteem entertained for the supposed music of the swan, that the poets were, uniformly, fond of arrogating this appellation to themselves. Pindar, Virgil, and many others, have been often thus denominated; and it is to the swan that Horace refers in the following verses:

Jam jam residunt cruribus asperæ
Pelles, et album mutor in *alitem*
Superne, nascunturque læves
Per digitos humerosque plumæ.

Lib. II. Od. 20.

Now, now harsh scales my legs invest;
A whitening bird, above, I grow:
O'er all my fingers, arms and crest,
I feel the downy plumage flow.

There is a passage in the first book of Cicero's Tusculan Questions, that forms so admirable a comment upon this comparison of Lucretius, that I cannot avoid translating it. "The chattering and importunate swallow," says he, "is an emblem of the ignorant: but the swan that never sings till he feels the approach of death, seems to possess some presentiment that death is not without its blessing;—hence he becomes an emblem of the wise."

The Abbé Delille, in his description of this magnificent bird, has alluded to the same popular tradition, in the following elegant verses:

Au milieu d'eaux s'eleve, et nage avec fierté
Le cygne au cou superbe, au plumage argenté;

Or the young kid, all tremulous of limb,
Strive with the strength, the fleetness of the horse?
Thou, sire of science! with paternal truths
Thy sons enrichest: from thy peerless page,
Illustrious chief! as from the flow'ry field
Th' industrious bee culls honey, we alike
Cull many a golden precept—golden each—
And each most worthy everlasting life.

---

Le cygne, à qui l'erreur prêta des chants aimables,
Et qui n'a pas besoin du mensonge des fables.
Les Jardins, Chant. iii.

High o'er the waves, in silver plumage gay,
The stately swan selects his wat'ry way;
The swan, by fiction grac'd with sweetest tone,
But never charm who needs beyond his own.

Swans, in Grecian fiction, were the peculiar property of Venus, and answered the purpose of flying horses or cherubims, by drawing her aërial car through the heavens. Camoens has very classically adhered to this tradition, as also to that of their musical powers, in the following verses:

Dentro no carro o filho seu recebe,
A redea alarga âs aves, cujo canto
A Phaetontea morte chorou tanto.
Lusiados, Cant. ix.

Beneath the reins the stately birds that sing
Their sweet-ton'd death-song spread the snowy wing.
Mickle.

Ver. 11. *Thou, sire of science! with paternal truths Thy sons enrichest:*——] In the original, thus:

Tu, Pater! es rerum inventor; tu patria nobis
Subpeditas præcepta:

in which the terms patria præcepta, paternal truths, are quaintly enough conceived by Des Coutures, to mean *patriotic precepts*; in consequence of which, the passage is thus translated: "Vous vous faites part des preceptes dont vous avez enrichi votre patrie." "Lucretius," says he, in a note on this passage, "regards the discoveries of Epicurus as a present made to all Greece." How much more classical is the interpretation of Marchetti:

Tu di cose inventor; tu padre sei;
Tu ne *porgi paterni* insegnamente, &c.

Ver. 14. ——*we alike*
*Cull many a golden precept*——] It is known to every one, that the moral verses of Pythagoras were denominated Χρυσα Επη, "golden verses:" and Faber conjectures, with much propriety, that Lucretius refers to this appellation in the present simile. Dyer has an allusion to the same passage, drawn from the sweet employment, and the indefatigable industry of the bee. The English bard is referring to his own clerical capacity:

For me, 'tis mine to pray that men regard
Their occupations with an honest heart,
And *chearful diligence*; *like the useful bee*,
*To gather* for the hive not *sweets* alone,
But wax, and each material. Fleece, b. ii.

Mason has employed a similar figure in his impressive Elegy on the Death of Lady Coventry. He is addressing the vain, the young, and the proud:

——while *borne on busy wing*
Ye *sip the nectar of each varying bloom*,
Nor fear, while *basking in the beams* of spring,
The wint'ry storm that sweeps you to the tomb;
Think of her fate!

Nam, simul ac ratio tua cœpit vociferari
Naturam rerum, divinâ mente coortam,
Diffugiunt animi terrores; mœnia mundi
Discedunt, totum video per inane geri res:
Adparet divôm numen, sedesque quietæ;
Quas neque concutiunt ventei, nec nubila nimbis
Adspargunt: neque nix, acri concreta pruinâ,
Cana cadens, violat: semper sine nubibus æther
Integer, et large diffuso lumine, ridit.
Omnia subpeditat porro natura, neque ulla

---

Ver. 17. *For as the doctrines of thy god-like mind*
*Prove into birth how nature first uprose,*]
Thus rendered by Marchetti:

E non si tosto a sparger cominciossi
Tuo parer: che dagli Dei creata
Le cose *non* sia l'alma natura.

By Creech, as follows:

For when I hear thy mighty reasons prove
The world was made without the powers above.

The difference between these versions, and that in the text, is so obvious and considerable as to render it necessary for me to justify the change I have introduced. Marchetti and Creech have both followed the common, but erroneous reading, which runs thus:

Nam simul ac ratio tua cœpit vociferari
Naturam rerum *haud* divina mente coortam.

The term *haud* is, unquestionably, an interpolation; it is not to be found in any of the most ancient, and correct copies; and is totally inconsistent with the plain and obvious sense of the poet himself. Mr. Wakefield has hence justly discharged it from its post. The *divina mente* indubitably refers to Epicurus; but some conceited and mistaken editor, apprehending it applied to an eternal intelligent mind, whom, in this case, Lucretius *would* openly admit to be the creator of the universe, which it has been generally, though, in some sense, falsely conceived he did not admit,—with a most licentious, and unpardonable use of the pen, attempted, by introducing the negative *haud*, to make sense of what is much better sense without it. The ingenious device, as it was conceived, soon multiplied, and has hence found its way into the greater number of modern editions. Without repeating in this place what appears to have been the real creed of Lucretius respecting the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, and primary Creator, I beg leave to refer the reader to the biography prefixed to the volume before him, and to the notes on Book II. v. 182, and v. 1100. It is from such errors, and wilful perversions of the text, as that now under consideration, that Lucretius has often been made to assert propositions, and uphold doctrines, which, in reality, by no means appertain to his system. In the present instance, the original meaning is first misconceived; —then the text is hardily and unnecessarily transformed; and at last, with idle triumph, advances a commentator upon this spurious passage, and declares, that the writer of it hereby asserts, che Epicuro hà insegnato la natura non dipendere da Dio: "that Epicurus taught, the world did not proceed from God." Frachetta Spositione, Lett. iii.

For as the doctrines of thy godlike mind
Prove into birth how nature first uprose,
All terrors vanish; the blue walls of heaven
Fly instant—and the boundless void throughout
Teems with created things. Then too we trace
The powers immortal, and their blest abodes;
Scenes where the winds rage never—unobscur'd
By clouds, or snow white-drifting,—and o'erspread
With laughing ether, and perennial day.
There nature fills each want, nor aught up-springs

---

Ver. 19. *All terrors vanish;*——] It is to this passage Bruno alludes in the following exultation: Spento a fatto il terror vane e puerile della morte, si conosco una parte della felicità chi apporta la nostra contemplazione secundo i fondamenti della nostra filosofia: atteso che lei toglo il fusco velo de pazzo sentimento circa l'orco, ed avaro Caronte, onde il piu dolce della nostra vita ne si rape, ed avvelena. Della Causa, Principio, &c. "The vain and puerile fear of death is extinguished, when once a man is acquainted with but a single part of that felicity which a contemplation of the principles of our philosophy essentially produces; for till then, the thick darkness of idle conjecture respecting hell, and avaritious Charon, hurries him away, empoisoning, and totally destroying almost all the happiness of his life."

Ver. 23. *Scenes where the winds rage never—unobscur'd*
*By clouds, or snow white-drifting,—and o'erspread*
*With laughing ether, and perennial day.*] I have had occasion to observe before, in note on Book I. v. 57, that the state of tranquillity and beatitude, attributed by Lucretius to the angelic natures who form his secondary gods, perfectly coincides with various descriptions of Homer respecting the gods of the people. The passage before us is obviously imitated from the following:

Ἠ μεν αρ', ὡς ειπους, απεβη γλαυκωπις Αθηνη
Ουλυμποδ', ὁθι φασι θεων εδος, ασφαλες αιει,
Εμμεναι· ουτ' ανεμοισι τιναξσεται, ουτε ποτ' ομβρω
Δευεται· ουτε χιων επιπιλναται· αλλα μαλ αιθρη
Πεπταται ανεφελος, λευκη δ' επιδρεδομεν αιγλη.
Odyss. Z. 42.

The seat of gods, the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm eternity of ease:
There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
No rains descend, no snowy vapours rise;
But on immortal thrones the blest repose
While the bright heaven with living lustre glows.
Pope.

Not widely different Mr. Cumberland, in the following verses, which comprize a part of the dialogue between Satan and Gabriel:

Heaven knows no winter; there no tempests howl:
To breathe perpetual spring, to sleep supine
On flowery beds of amaranth, and rose,
Voluptuous slavery, was Gabriel's choice.

Res animi pacem delibat tempore in ullo.
At contra nusquam adparent Acherusia templa;
Nec tellus obstat, quin omnia despiciantur,
Sub pedibus quæquomque infra per inane geruntur.
Hiis ibi me rebus quædam divina voluptas
Percipit, atque horror; quod sic natura, tuâ vi
Tam manifesta patens, ex omni parte retecta est.
Et, quoniam docui, cunctarum exordia rerum
Qualia sint, et quam, variis distantia formis,
Sponte suâ volitent, æterno percita motu;
Quoque modo possint res ex hiis quæque creari:
Hasce secundum res animi natura videtur,

Ver. 25. *With laughing ether,*——] So Chaucer, in his description of the ruddy morning:

And firie Phebus rysith up so bright
That all the orient *laughith* at the sight.
Cant. Knight's Tale, v. 1495.

But Casimir, with a still closer resemblance:

Dum *ridet aër*, et supinas
Solicitat levis aura frondes. Ad Testud.

While *ether laughs*, and wanton airs
Kiss the young leaves the poplar bears.

Ver. 31. ——*a sublime delight,*
*A sacred horror sways me*——] Nothing can be more awfully grand, or seriously impressive. In the original, it occurs thus:

Hiis ibi me rebus quædam *divina voluptas*
Percipit, atque *horror*;

Marchetti has, most unfortunately, exchanged the term *horror* for *stupor*, surprize, astonishment; a very different feeling from that expressed by the former terms, and far less dignified:

——ond' io rapirmi
A te mi sento da cotal divino
E diletto e *stupor*.

Creech has entirely omitted this latter passion, and hereby destroyed more than half the beauty of the picture, unless he meaned to express it under the term *silently*, a term, however, which does not exist in his author:

From thoughts like these, I *mighty pleasure* find,
And *silently admire* thy strength of mind.

But, what is more extraordinary still, even the prose version of Guernier has said as little upon the subject as Creech, and less than Marchetti: "a certain divine pleasure," says the translator, "spreads around me, and I stand amazed, that by thy ſtrength of mind," &c. This is to give a prose version of Creech, and not of Lucretius.

The union of terror and joy is by no means uncommon, and is hence often represented upon adequate occasions, by writers duly attentive to nature.

To mar th'eternal harmony of soul.—
Yet nought exists of hell's infernal reign:
Nor hides the solid earth the scenes from sight
Spread through the void beneath.—On these vast themes
As deep I ponder, a sublime delight,
A sacred horror sways me—Nature thus
By thy keen skill through all her depths unveil'd.
Since, then, we erst have sung the make minute
Of primal seeds; how, in spontaneous course
Re-active urg'd, their various figures fly,
And, hence, how all things into life ascend,
Next let our daring verse the frame unfold

---

Thus, Homer:

Την δ' αμα ΧΑΡΜΑ και ΑΛΓΟΣ ἑλε φρενα.

Od. T. 471.

Delight and Horror seize the soul, conjoin'd.

So, in that exquisite delineation of the feelings of the afflicted and pious females who, while examining our Saviour's sepulchre, were consoled by the appearance of an angel, informing them of his resurrection, cap. xxviii. v. 8. εξελθουσαι ταχυ απο του μνημειου μετα ΦΟΒΟΥ και ΧΑΡΑΣ μεγαλης. "And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy."

T'homson was a steady and philosophic observer of nature; he saw the beauty and propriety of the passage in question, and in the following verses has studiously copied it:

Deep-rous'd, I feel
A sacred *terror*, a severe *delight*,
Creep through my mortal frame.

Summer, v. 540.

To the very same effect Armstrong, in his Art of Preserving Health:

Through every nerve
A *sacred horror* thrills, a pleasing *fear*
Glides o'er my frame. Book II.

In the following exquisite passage of Ossian, we meet with a similar, and equally beautiful contrast of feeling: "He retired in the sound of his song. Carril joined his voice. The music was like the memory of joys that are past, *pleasant* and *mournful* to the soul." Battle of Lora.

In like manner, and equally true to nature, the sentimental Wieland:

Verszeyht mir, junger mann! Es war ein augenblick,
Ein traum aus bessrer zeit! *so süs!* und auch *so bitter!*

Oberon, i. 23.

——a dream of happier days
*So sweet*, yet ah! *so bitter!*—o'er me came.

Sotheby.

Ver. 32. ——*Nature thus*
*By thy keen skill through all her depths unveil'd.*]

The commentator upon Creech has well observed,

Atque animæ, claranda meis jam versibus esse;
Et metus ille foras præceps Acheruntis agundus,
Funditus humanam qui vitam turbat ab imo,
Omnia subfuscans mortis nigrore; neque ullam
Esse voluptatem liquidam, puramque, relinquit.
Nam, quod sæpe homines morbos magis esse timendos
Infamemque ferunt vitam, quam Tartara leti;
Et se scire animæ naturam, sanguinis esse,

that Butler appears to have parodied this verse of our poet, in the following lines:

——he profess'd
He had first matter seen undress'd;
He took her naked, all alone,
Before one rag of form was on.
The chaos too, he had descried,
And seen quite through, or else he lied.
Hudibras.

This effusion of real wit will apply, however, with, perhaps, more pertinency, to many of our modern cosmogonists, than to Lucretius, or Epicurus.

Ver. 39. ——*chase, far chase*
*Those fears of future torment that distract*
*Man's total being; with the gloom of death*, &c.]
See, in note on ver. 19 of this Book, the comment of Bruno upon this, and a similar passage.

——there could I rest
And sleep secure, his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears, no fear of worse
To me, and to my offspring, would torment
With cruel expectation.
Par. Lost, Book X. v. 778.

The uncertainty of a future state, and more especially of the happiness or misery with which it might be pregnant, produced, in many instances, an undue dread of death among the philosophers of ancient times, and often embittered the life, and destroyed the courage of the most worthy and the most virtuous. A posterior existence was seldom accredited without much hesitation and doubt; and hence, even among those who did admit the questionable tenet into their creed, it was judged necessary to fortify the mind against the approach of dissolution by other considerations and arguments. Hence, by some philosophers, the value of life was unnecessarily depreciated; its pleasures were represented as being, even in their state of utmost perfection, unsolid, unsatisfactory, and evanescent; and life itself, as a gift scarce worthy of the Supreme Giver; a possession which might reasonably be resigned without regret. While others, allowing to the pleasures of life the full scope of their value, purposely abstained from indulging in them, lest they should become so enamoured of existence as not to quit it, or even to endure the thought of quitting it, without horror. They deadened their desires by a series of perpetual abstinences and mortifications, till at length, by habit alone, they lost all relish for enjoyment, and became indifferent to every change that might chance to occur. Neither of these, however, formed the system of Epicurus. Conceiving that the arguments deducible from nature were considerably more cogent in the disproof than in the support of a future existence, instead of suffering himself to become a perpetual prey to the alternate preponderancies of hope and fear, he boldly relinquished the doctrine altogether; and, freed from this anxiety, felt himself at liberty to calculate the real blessing and value of life, as it relates to the present world. Instead of despising exist-

Of soul, and reasoning mind;—and chase, far chase
Those fears of future torment that distract
Man's total being; with the gloom of death
Tinge all things; nor e'en suffer once the tide
Of present joy to flow serene and pure.
For though, full oft, men boast they far prefer
Death to disease, or infamy of name,
Assert they know the soul but springs from blood,

---

ence, he encouraged an indulgence in the enjoyments it presented: pleasure became his prime object; and wherever it was to be traced, he pursued it; not, however, the pleasures of the vain, the ambitious, or the voluptuous; for these, he well knew, carried with them a sting which poisoned all the gratification they presented; but the pure, satisfactory, and permanent pleasures of temperance, benevolence, and the study of nature. His preparation for death, or the contemplations by which he endeavoured to disarm it of its terrors, were, in like manner, as different from those of other philosophers, as his regulations for the enjoyment of life. As the latter part of the book before us is entirely devoted to this subject, it is unnecessary to enter upon its consideration in this place. Armed, as the Christian is, with an infinitely better panoply than the arguments of Epicurus can possibly afford him, he may, nevertheless, peruse them with satisfaction, and even improvement: he may add, to the motives presented to him by Revelation, whatever can be derived *from the suggestions of nature.*

Ver. 46. ——*the soul but springs from blood,*] This was the common belief among all ancient nations: and those, therefore, who conceived that death was not a complete termination of existence, were under the necessity of conceiving, at the same time, that there was some other principle besides the soul, or animal life, which constituted a part of the nature of man. To this effect, we have still remaining a verse of Empedocles:

Αιμα γαρ ανθροποις περικαρδιον, εστι νοημα.

The heart's warm blood in mortals forms the soul.

On this account, Homer correctly applies to death the epithet of *purple*, πορφυρεος θανατος, Iliad V. v. 83. And Virgil, imitating him, asserts

*Purpuream* vomit ille *animam*, et cum *sanguine* mista,
Vina refert moriens; Æn. ix. v. 349.

His *purple soul* he vomits; mixt with wine
Back flows the vital fluid as he dies.

The same idea was prevalent among the Jews. Thus the Almighty is represented as declaring to Moses, "the *blood* is the *life* of all flesh, the *blood* of it is for the *life* thereof." Levit. xvii. v. 14. Milton has borrowed the same idea; and, in describing the death of Abel, affirms

——he fell, and deadly pale
Groan'd out his *soul, with gushing blood effus'd.*

Nor is such a belief confined to ancient times, or the uninstructed multitude. Bonnet, Buffon, Blumenbach and Darwin, have all contended, that the blood, when once rendered perfect in the animal system, becomes itself highly *animalized*; or, in the too fanciful language of the last of these naturalists, "obtains a kind of vitality," and "a *propensity* to unite with the fibrils of the organ, for the support of which it is separated, and which sympathetically manifests even a superior *affinity* for such [blood]." Phytology. i. 7.

Aut etiam venti, si fert ita forte voluntas,
Nec prorsum quidquam nostræ rationis egere;
Hinc licet advortas animum, magis omnia laudis,
Jactari caussam, quam quod res ipsa probetur:
Extorres iidem patriâ, longeque fugatei
Conspectu ex hominum, fedatei crimine turpi,
Omnibus ærumnis adfectei denique, vivunt;
Et, quoquomque tamen miserei venere, parentant,
Et nigras mactant pecudes, et manibus divis
Inferias mittunt; multoque in rebus acerbis
Acrius advortunt animos ad religionem.
Quo magis in dubiis hominem spectare periclis
Convenit, advorsisque in rebus noscere, quid sit:
Nam veræ voces tum demum pectore ab imo

Ver. 47. *Or, if the humour urge them, is but air,*] The corresponding line in the original is as follows:

Aut etiam venti, si fert ita forte voluntas.

In the common editions, this line is placed two lower than in the present, being v. 46, instead of v. 44, where it has remained for ages a stumbling-block to the ingenuity of every commentator who has endeavoured, in that situation, to give it a meaning. For its present change, the reader is indebted to a critic of consummate judgment, whose name and act are thus noticed by Mr. Wakefield: "The idea of this valuable transposition, which cannot be estimated too highly, is due alone to the sagacity of Bentley, and is well worthy of such sagacity. How would Lucretius hail him for it! How happily are the idle comments of former interpreters surrendered hereby in a moment to darkness and oblivion!"

On the doctrine, that the soul originates from air, or aërial auras, see the ensuing note on v. 100.

Ver. 53. *—fell new victims, and th' infernal powers Implore with black oblations;*] The sacrifices offered to the infernal deities, or manes of deceased persons, to obtain their favour, were denominated inferiæ, and were always selected of a black colour. Hence Virgil, in the tale of Aristæus:

Inferias Orphei lethæa papavera mittes,
Placatam Eurydicen vitulâ venerabere cæsâ,
Et *nigram* mactabis *ovem*, Georg. iv. v. 545.
To Orpheus deadly poppies strew, appease
With heifer slain, and *black devoted* sheep
Eurydice's vext spirit.

This practice of offering sacrifices, both to the superior and inferior gods, has been common in every country that has acknowledged the existence of a good and evil principle; whether these principles have consisted of two, or of a greater number of deities: to the former sacrifice, the people being urged by gratitude, to the latter by fear. Such was the practice among

Or, if the humour urge them, is but air,
And hence, that useless all the lore we bring:—
Oft flows the boast from love of praise alone.
For when of home debarr'd, from every haunt
Of man cut off, with conscious guilt o'erpower'd,
Midst every ill such boasters still survive:
Still fell new victims, and th' infernal powers
Implore with black oblations; through their breast
Religion thus with ten-fold force propell'd.
Through doubtful dangers, hence, through straits severe
Pursue the race of man; then sole ascends
Truth from the lowliest bosom, then alone

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most Oriental nations, and even the Druids of our own country. Zoroastres commanded the offering of prayers to Arimanius the principle of evil, as well as to Oromasdes the principle of good: and the bramins of the present day, adore Seeva, the destroyer of things, as well as Veshnu, the creating and preserving spirit; and regard him, indeed, as coequal and coeternal with the latter. The Jews themselves were not unfrequently guilty of the same idolatrous conduct: and even Solomon, in the midst of his prosperity, did not refrain from paying divine honours to Moloch, the evil demon of the Ammonites. See 1 Kings, cap. xi. v. 7. Hence Milton, speaking of this idol:

the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God,
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence,
And black Gehenna called, the type of hell.
Par. Lost, Book I.

Ver. 56. *Through doubtful dangers, hence, through straits severe*
*Pursue the race of man; then sole ascends*
*Truth from the lowliest bosom,*—] To the same effect, Ariosto, in the following stanza:

Alcun non puo saper da chi sia amato
Quando felice in su la rota siede:
Però, c' ha i veri, e i finti amici a lato,
Che mostran tutti una medesma fede.
Se poi si cangia in tristo il lieto stato,
Volta la turba adulatrice il piede:
E quel, che di cuor ama, riman forte,
Ed ama il suo signor dopo la morte.
Orland. Fur. Cant. xix.

None see the heart when placed in prosperous state,
On Fortune's wheel, such numbers round them wait
Of true and seeming friends; when these no less
By looks declare that faith which those possess.
But should to fair, succeed tempestuous skies,
Behold! how soon each fawning suppliant flies:

Eliciuntur; et eripitur persona, manet res.
Denique, avarities, et honorum cæca cupido,
Quæ miseros homines cogunt transscendere fineis
Juris; et interdum, socios scelerum atque ministros,
Nocteis atque dies niti præstante labore
Ad summas emergere opes: hæc volnera vitæ
Non minumam partem mortis formidine aluntur.
Turpis enim ferme contemptus, et acris egestas,
Semota ab dulci vitâ, stabilique, videtur;
Et quasi jam leti portas contarier ante.
Unde homines, dum se, falso terrore coactei,
Ecfugisse volunt longe, longeque remosse;
Sanguine civili rem conflant, divitiasque
Conduplicant avidei, cædem cæde adcumulantes:

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While he who truly lov'd, unmov'd remains,
And to his patron dead his love maintains. Hoole.

Ver. 60. *E'en restless avarice, and love of fame,*
*So oft to deeds unrighteous that seduce,*] Frachetta and Faber have bestowed a most high and deserved applause upon these, and the thirty ensuing verses, in which the poet justly and forcibly pourtrays many of those envenomed passions which are excited in the bosom from an undue dread of death. The following lines of Dr. Young are in strict consonance with the same delineation:

Ah! how unjust to Nature and himself
Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man;
Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,
We censure Nature for *a span too short;*
That span too short we tax as *tedious* too;
Torture invention, all expedients tire,
To lash the lingering moments into speed,
And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.
Art, brainless Art, our furious charioteer,
Drives headlong tow'rds the precipice of death,
*Death most our dread, death thus more dreadful made.*
Night Thoughts.

Ver. 61. *So oft to deeds unrighteous that seduce,*
*And spread the growing guilt from man to man,*]
It is well worth while to compare, in this place, Ercilla's Address to Avarice, with the present painting of Lucretius:

O incurabil mal! o gran fatiga!
Con tanta diligencia alimentada;
Vicio comun, y pegajosa liga,
Voluntad sin razon desenfrenada:
Del provecho, y bien publico enemiga,
Sedierta bestia, hydropica hinchada,
Principio y fin de todos nuestros males,
O insaciable codicia de mortales.
Arancan. Cant. ix.

O cureless malady! O fatal pest!
Embrac'd with ardour, and with pride carest;

Flies all profession, and the fact unfolds.
E'en restless avarice, and love of fame,
So oft to deeds unrighteous that seduce,
And spread the growing guilt from man to man,
By ceaseless toil urg'd on, and night and day,
Striving the croud t' o'ertop—these pests of life
Draw half their vigour from the dread of death.
For infamy, contempt, and want severe,
These chief embitter mortals; these, they deem,
Death's foremost train; and, studious these to shun,
Far off they fly, still wand'ring from the right,
Urg'd on by fear, and kindle civil broils,
And murder heap on murder, doubling thus,
Ceaseless, their stores insatiate: raptur'd high

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Thou common vice, thou most contagious ill,
Bane of the mind, and frenzy of the will!
Thou foe to private, and to public health;
Thou dropsy of the soul, that thirsts for wealth,
Insatiate Av'rice! 'tis from thee we trace
The various mis'ry of our mortal race. Hayley.

So in the Hitépadésa of Vishnusarman, as translated by Sir Wm. Jones: "Through covetousness comes anger; through covetousness comes lust; through covetousness come fraud and illusion: covetousness is the cause of all sins."

Ver. 70. ——*kindle civil broils,*
*And murder heap on murder,*——] This description of culprits our poet first enters upon his list, as deeming them first in magnitude of guilt. A bard of our own nation, of no contemptible abilities, appears to have been of the same sentiment; and in a poem on the Day of Judgment, having seated the Almighty on his throne, and led forwards the caitiffs of the earth, he asserts:

——First among these
Behold the mighty murderers of mankind:
They, who in sport, whole kingdoms slew, or they
Who, to the tottering pinnacle of pow'r,
Waded through seas of blood! Glynn.

Ver 71. ——*doubling thus,*
*Ceaseless, their stores insatiate:*—] Juvenal has obviously copied this verse of the original:

——per fraudes patrimonia conduplicare.
Doubling by fraud their patrimonial stores.
Sat. xiv. 229.

Ver. 72. ——*raptur'd high*
*When breathes a brother his last languid groan;*] Macrobius justly observes (Saturnal. Lib. vi. cap. 2.) that Virgil has imitated this verse of Lucretius in the following:

—gaudent perfusi sanguine fratrum,
Georg. ii. v. 510.
Stain'd with the blood of brothers, they rejoice.

Crudeles gaudent in tristi funere fratris;
Et consanguineûm mensas odere, timentque.

Consimili ratione, ab eodem sæpe timore
Macerat invidia: ante oculos illum esse potentem,
Illum adspectari, claro qui incedit honore;
Ipsei se in tenebris volvi, cœnoque, queruntur.
Intereunt partim statuarum, et nominis, ergo;
Et sæpe usque adeo, mortis formidine, vitæ
Percipit humanos odium, lucisque videndæ,

---

And the whole description reminds us of a passage in Hesiod, the former part of which I have already quoted in the note on Book II. v. 1178.

Ουδε πατηρ παιδεσσιν ὁμοιιος, ουδε τι παιδες,
Ουδε ξεινος ξεινοδοκῳ, και εταιρος εταιρῳ,
Ουδε κασιγνητος φιλος εσσεται, ὡς το παρος περ·
Αιψα δε γηρασκοντας ατιμησουσι τοκηας·
Μεμψονται δ' αρα τους, χαλεποις βαζοντε επεσσι
Σχετλιοι, ουδε θεων οπιν ειδοτες.

Op. et Dies. A. 180.

Nor sire the son, nor son the sire attends,
Nor host with host, nor friends unite with friends;
Nor love fraternal triumphs, as of late;
Endearments mutual chang'd to mutual hate.
The graceless youth reviles his father's years,
Loads him with taunts, nor heaven's omniscience fears.

Ver. 74. *And e'en, suspicious, and, with secret dread, Joining the feast——*] Thus Juvenal, more at large, and forming an excellent comment upon our text:

Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum
Facti crimen habet. Cedo, si conata peregit?
Perpetua anxietas, nec mensæ tempore cessat;
Faucibus, ut morbo, siccis, interque molares
Difficili crescente cibo. Sed vina misellus
Exspuit: Albani veteris pretiosa senectus
Displicet. Ostendas melius, densissima ruga
Cogitur in frontem, velut acri ducta Falerno.

Sat. xiii. 208.

He works a crime in secret who but plots.—
But say, if work'd, the doom that heav'n allots?—
O! his is endless anguish. Parch'd with heat,
His fev'rish palate hates the banquet's treat:
Slowly his mouth the gath'ring morsel churns;
Wine makes him sick:—Albania's best he spurns;
Still nobler bring; his ruggly front is wrung
As though, his lips, Falernian verjuice stung;

To the same effect, the following deprecation of the psalmist: Ps. lxix. 22, 23.

ויתנו בברותי ראש
ולצמאי ישקוני חמץ:
יהי שלחנם לבניהם לפח
ולשלומים למוקש:

With my food they mix'd wormwood,
And, in my thirst, gave me sour wine:
*May their own table, when they are present, prove a trap,*
*And, by way of retribution, a snare!*

When breathes a brother his last, languid groan;
And with mistrust, through ev'ry nerve alarm'd,
Joining the feast some jovial kinsman forms.
From the same source, the same deep dread of death,
Springs Envy poisoning all things: mortals, hence,
Lament to power that this, to glory that,
Crown'd with the people's plaudits, should ascend,
While all unnotic'd, 'mid the croud obscure
Themselves still jostle; pining ev'ry hour,
For names, for statues; and, full oft, so strong
From dread of death, hate they the light of heaven,

---

Ver. 77. *Springs* Envy *poisoning all things:*—] The poetical patriarch of Greece, from whom I have just quoted, has, in the same book, a bold and correct personification of the same passion, which he represents as perpetually haunting mankind in the midst of all their pursuits, while Modesty and Justice retreat from the world to their native skies, and leave it a prey to every calamity:

Ζηλος δ' ανθροποισιν' οϊζυροισιν ἁπασιν,
Δυσκελαδος, κακοχαρτος, ἑμαρτησει στυγερωπης,
Και τοτε δη προς ολυμπον απο χθονος ευρυοδειης,
Λευκοισιν Φαρεεσσι καλυψαμενω χροα καλον,
Αθανατων μετα φυλον ιτον προλιποντ' ανθρωπους
Αιδως και Νεμεσις· τα δε λειψεται αλγεα λυγρα
Θνητοις ανθρωποισι, κακου δ' ουκ εσσεται αλκη.

Malignant, mutt'ring Envy's hateful form
Now haunts mankind, and mightier mischiefs swarm.
From the broad earth tow'rds heav'n their native skies
Fair Modesty and manly Justice rise;
Round their bright limbs etherial vestments flow:
Man marks their flight, and faints beneath his woe.

The following verses of Thomson are more full in their delineation of the same passion, in conjunction with others, which are closely connected with it:

Convulsive Anger storms at large; or pale
And silent, settles into fell Revenge.
*Base Envy withers at another's joy,*
And hates that Excellence it cannot reach.
*Desponding Fear, of feeble fancies full,*
*Weak and unmanly,* loosens ev'ry power.—
Then dark Disgust, and *Hatred, winding Wiles,*
*Coward Deceit,* and *ruffian Violence:*
At last, extinct each social feeling, fell
And joyless Inhumanity pervades,
And petrifies the heart. Spring, 281.

Ver. 77. ——*mortals, hence,*
*Lament to power that this, to glory that,*
*Crown'd with the people's plaudits, should ascend,*] To the same effect, Pope, in his Essay on Man:

In pride, in reasoning pride our error lies.
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies:
Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
Men would be angels, angels would be gods.
Epist. i.

Ut sibi consciscant mœrenti pectore letum;
Oblitei fontem curarum, hunc esse timorem;
Hunc, vexare pudorem; hunc, vincula amicitiaï
Rumpere; et, in summâ, pietatem evortere suadet:
Nam jam sæpe homines patriam, carosque parenteis,
Prodiderunt, vitare Acherusia templa petentes.
Nam, velutei puerei trepidant, atque omnia cæcis
In tenebris metuunt; sic nos in luce timemus
Interdum, nihilo quæ sunt metuenda magis, quam
Quæ puerei in tenebris pavitant, finguntque futura.
Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque, necesse est,
Non radiei solis, neque lucida tela diei,

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Ver. 82. ——*so strong*
*From dread of death, hate they the light of heav'n,*
*That, sick at heart, through their own breasts they plunge*
*The fatal steel:*——] Martial has an epigram founded upon the same idea, and entitled to a quotation in the present place:

Hostem cum fugeret, se Fannius ipse peremit,
Hic rogo, non furor est, ne moriare, mori?
L. ii. Epig. 80.

The foe pursu'd, and Fannius quick
Destroyed himself while flying.
Yet who besides a lunatic
Would flee from death by dying?

This strange and inconsistent effect of fear is well commented upon in the following verses of Butler: who tells us, that it will often

Do things not contrary alone
To th' force of nature, but its own:
The courage of the bravest daunt,
And turn poltroons to valiant.
For men as resolute appear
With too much as too little fear;
And when they're out of hopes of flying,
*Will run away from death by dying.* Hudibras.

The passage in our own poet, however, bears a much nearer affinity to one in Ercilla's Araucana, and an affinity that seems to indicate an allusion on the part of the Spanish bard. He compares the Indians, who were surprized in their fort, to the villain who is continually trembling for his fate, and conscious of merited punishment:

Como los malhechores, que en su officio,
*Jamas pueden pallar parte segura,*

That, sick at heart, through their own breasts they plunge
The fatal steel: heedless that this alone,
This pungent dread, engenders all their cares,
Nips the keen sense of shame—turns friends to foes,
And bursts the bonds that harmonize the heart.
For, goaded hence, hell ever in his sight,
Man oft betrays his country; and, for gold,
Yields up the rev'rend form that gave him birth.
For as the boy, when midnight veils the skies,
Trembles and starts at all things—so, full oft,
E'en in the noon, men start at forms as void
Of real danger as the phantoms false
By darkness conjur'd, and the school-boy's dread.
A terror this the radiant darts of day
Can ne'er disperse. To truth's pure light alone,

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Por ser la condicion propria del vicio
Temer qualquier fortuna y desventura
Qui no sienten tan presto algun bullicio
Quando el castigo y mal se les figura,
Y corren à les armar y defensa,
Segun que cada qual valer se piensa.

Cant. xiv.

As villains conscious of their life impure,
*Find, in their guilty course, no spot secure*;
For vice is ever doom'd new fears to feel,
And tremble at each turn of Fortune's wheel;
*At ev'ry noise, at each alarm that stirs,*
*Death's penal horror to their mind occurs*;
Quick to their arms they fly, with wild dismay,
And rush where hasty terror points the way.

Hayley.

Ver. 86. *This pungent dread, engenders all their cares,*] Much of this passage is imitated, though feebly, by Blackmore, in his Creation:

Carus, we grant no man is blest but he
Whose mind from anxious thoughts of death is free;
If dread of death still unsubdu'd remains,
And secret, o'er the vanquish'd victor reigns
Th' illustrious slave in endless thraldom bears
A heavier chain than that his captive wears
What are distinctions, honours, wealth, and state? &c.

Book IV.

Ver. 92. *For as the boy, when midnight veils the skies,*] With this simile, certainly a very pertinent one, Lucretius appears to have been particularly delighted; for he repeats it in this place, from Book II. v. 55, and recurs to it once more in Book VI. v. 35.

Discutiant; sed Naturæ species, Ratioque.
Primum, animum dico, mentem quem sæpe vocamus,

Ver. 99. *And wisdom yielding, intellectual suns.*] The following idea of Moliere is perfectly parallel, and his advice, when applied to the subject before us, is well worth attending to.

Consulte ta raison, *prens sa clarté pour guide,*
Voi si de tes soupçons l'apparence est solide;
Ne demens pas leur voix.
D. Garcie de Navarre, Act ii.

Consult thy reason; *be her lamp thy* guide;
Weigh well thy views; let *reason* still decide;
Her voice abjure not.

Ver. 100. *First, then, the mind, the spirit nam'd at times,*] It is enough to confound the pride of the most confident philosopher, if it be not deemed libellous to the character of a philosopher to conceive that he *can* be confident, to reflect on the very little he knows, after all his reading and researches, of the substance that constitutes the existence, either of himself, or of external objects. Matter, even in its simplest form, inactive as it may appear to be, is the most fugitive thing imaginable: and, although the atomic system, which reduces the whole to primordial and extreme corpuscles, equally devoid of all properties but those of solidity and motion, and which conceives, that all compound bodies whatsoever, are but different combinations of such corpuscles,—be most consistent with the experiments of modern chemistry, and form a grand principle in the Newtonian theory—yet, when we have advanced thus far in our researches, we are but upon the threshold of natural philosophy; a thousand phænomena are incessantly crouding upon us, which still demand explanation, and baffle the most enterprising efforts of curiosity and conjecture. Such then being the disappointments to which we are exposed in our investigations into the external world; it cannot be a matter of surprise, that when we ascend higher, and endeavour to develop the world of sensation and thought,—to unlock its secret springs, and trace its delicate dependencies, we should be still more subject to miscarriage, disagreement and error. One general conclusion however, it becomes us to draw from our discrepance and ill-success, and that is, to entertain a generous and liberal complacency for the presumptions and conjectures of each other.

Lucretius, who has endeavoured to demonstrate in the last book, v. 873.

That all the sentient forms the sight surveys,
Whate'er their powers, from senseless atoms spring,

now enters upon the great business of applying this axiom to the peculiar constitution of man; hereby maintaining, that the human soul, or principle of vitality and thought, is as purely material, as essentially derived from simple primordial corpuscles, as any other part of him. This he undertakes to prove in a series of twenty-eight arguments, extending from the present passage to v. 858 of the book before us: after which he deduces from such an established doctrine a variety of moral reflections, which, in point of wisdom, sublimity, and poetic excellence, never have been surpassed by any poet or philosopher whatever; and which are possessed of this peculiar advantage, that they are of universal application, let our system of ethics or religion be what it may. Respecting all these arguments, however, Frachetta has most illiberally declared, in his Exposition, sono in guisa redicula, che non porta il preggio di rigittarle—"they are, in themselves, so ridiculous, as not to be worth the expence of refuting them." But he nevertheless attempts a refutation, and proves the absurdity of so general and dogmatic an assertion, by completely failing, if I be not mistaken, in the whole of his attempt.

In pursuing the scope of his inquiry, our philosophic poet first endeavours to develop the substance of the soul; secondly, its more immediate seat, or presence-chamber; and, thirdly, its durability: and it may be of use to the reader, previous to his entering into the general detail of this important subject, to be made acquainted, by as brief a sketch as possible, with its leading ideas and dependencies.

The *immateriality* of the soul, strictly and properly

And wisdom yielding, intellectual suns.
First, then, the mind, the spirit nam'd at times, 100

so called, is a conception altogether modern: yet few, even in modern days, embrace the conception in a state of unmixed and perfect purity. Berkeley, who denied the existence of a material and external world, was, unquestionably, a proselyte to this belief; for, if there be no such thing as matter, the soul itself cannot be material. Des Cartes was a proselyte in an equal degree; for he not only maintained the existence of the soul's immateriality, but denied that it had any one property in common with matter. The difficulties, however, attendant upon these two hypotheses, and which I have endeavoured concisely to enumerate in the preceding life of our poet, are so extreme, that I believe few are to be found, in the present day, who profess them to their utmost extent. Generally speaking, some degree of materiality, such, at least, as will enable the soul to assume a material configuration, or to be capable of occasional vision to material organs, some phantasm, shade, or shadowy appearance, some capacity for the enjoyment of corporeal delights, however spiritualized and refined, are uniformly supposed to attach to it, even after its separation from the body. With such, the soul is not strictly immaterial: it cannot exist without an etherial or gaseous substratum, or vehicle: in reality, it cannot exist in a state separate from matter; and the poet before us has no contest with such persons otherwise than as to its powers of durability or incorruption, concerning which a revelation, posterior to his own era, has clearly ascertained to us that he was mistaken; but which nothing but such a revelation could have ascertained. Such persons may, therefore, peruse every argument which the text discloses, without dismay; they may admit their truth, without shuddering for the result: since the result to which nature and the poet would equally lead us, we now know to be subverted by a law of incorruption, communicated to us by the Christian Scriptures.

Coëval with our poet, there were as few who had a right to differ from him, so far as his principles applied, as there are in the present day. The generality of his contemporaries unquestionably, as among ourselves, believed in the soul's survival after the dissolution of the body; but they did not believe in its survival as a spirit strictly *immaterial*, or in a state of actual separation from matter. The soul conceived of by the multitude was a compound substance, sometimes supposed to consist of a *shade* and *spirit*, and sometimes of a *shade*, *spirit*, and *ghost*, to each of which a distinct and separate region was allotted, as I have already observed in the note on Book I. v. 136: but each of which was, at the same time, apprehended to be possessed of a material configuration, as well as organs, and subject to material pleasures or pains. The soul of the philosophers, notwithstanding all their boasting, was, in reality, as little exempt from matter, and as little capable of a separate existence, as that of the people. Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras, equally held the soul to be a compound being, of which a part, at least, was material. According to the opinion of the first, the human soul consists of an emanation of the Deity, united to a portion of the material soul of the world; and on its separation from the body, it is still surrounded by an οχημα, or material vehicle, till the resorption of the divine emanation into the divine nature, and the return of its mundane elements to the soul of the world, whence they issued. In consequence of which, it is not only necessarily material in a part of its constitution, but altogether incapable of a separate existence, or existence *per se*, strictly so called. The theory of Aristotle was not widely different; and, with respect to Pythagoras, from whom there can be no doubt that both Plato and Aristotle derived their ideas, he not only conceived the human soul to be a compound of an immaterial mind, and of sensitive matter, the former of which he denominated φρην, and maintained to be immortal; and the latter θυμος, and to perish with the body; but imagined that the φρην, or immaterial mind, when it quitted the body upon dissolution, was still surrounded by an οχημα, or vehicle of material ether, in a circumvolution of which it continued till some other body was

In quo consilium vitæ, regimenque, locatum est,
Esse hominis partem nihilo minus, ac manus, et pes,

prepared for it, being totally incapable of existing by itself, or in a state of total separation from matter.

In effect, each of these philosophers equally believed in the existence of a soul, or intelligible principle in the material world, independently of any communication from the supreme, or immaterial divinity; and, thus believing, they indirectly maintained, that matter of itself, under some modification or other, was capable of sensation and thought. But if pure, unmingled matter, be capable of such results, why have recourse to a second substance for that which matter alone is competent to exhibit? Why complicate causes, and multiply the machinery beyond the necessity of the case? Such appear to have been the views of Epicurus, and consequently of our own poet, upon this abstruse subject; and hence they discarded from the soul, or principle of thought and intelligence, every thing but simple, unalloyed matter. In the gradual operations of nature, they traced from matter alone, the origin of general gravitation, magnetism, irritability, and sensation: and, they hence saw no occasion for the introduction of a foreign substance, in the formation of thought, the mere result of this last quality, when sufficiently accumulated, or concentrated.

On these accounts, therefore, the system of Epicurus had to oppose, both the belief of the people, and the dogmas of other philosophers, who, as appears above, united in the conception, that an immaterial, as well as a material principle, was concerned in the creation of the human soul. But there were certain classes of materialists, as well as immaterialists, whom the present system had equally to counter-act: and especially those who, like Aristoxenus, maintained the soul, or sentient principle, to result from the harmonious adaptation of organ to organ, and limb to limb, *as a whole*; and those who, following the tenets of Democritus, conceived that it consisted alone of a certain number of percipient primordial atoms, interspersed throughout the body in the midst of a much larger mass of impercipient.

In opposition to these two last opinions more especially, Lucretius attempts to prove, in the first place, that the sentient principle consists alone of a combination of certain etherial gasses, or auras, imbibed with the breath from the atmosphere, secerned in due proportions by the bronchial vessels and lungs, and hence conveyed to the heart; and, secondly, that in consequence of such mechanism, the heart and præcordia are the chief seat of the soul, or intelligent spirit; hence radiating, as from a centre, towards every organ and extremity of the entire system. Modern chemistry, applied to modern anatomy, has, in many instances, as the reader will perceive in the prosecution of the present work, made a very considerable approach towards the former of these dogmas; it has proved, that the blood, as well as various other fluids, after their union with these secerned gasses, is possessed, in the language of M. Blumenbach, of a kind of perpetual *bildungstrieb*, or *formative nidus*, while through the whole course of the nerves it has enabled us to trace a secretion and incessant efflux of what is, in our own day, denominated pure galvanic aura: a fluid which is probably separated by the vast gland of the brain, and which we now know, to a certainty, constitutes the living principle, or spirit of animation.

From the immense importance of the heart and brain to the preservation of life and health, it has, under almost every theory, been conceived, that the mind or soul, whether material or immaterial, resides more immediately in the one or the other of these organs, than in any different part of the human system. In modern times, the brain has had the greater number of votaries; and some physiologists have pretended to view it with so microscopic an eye, as to detect the particular portion of the brain which it condescends more directly to occupy. This, by Des Cartes, was supposed to be the *pineal gland*; while Bonnet asserted it to be the *corpus callosum*. Others, on the contrary, and by far more

That which controls, which measures sentient life,
Forms of this mortal make a part as clear

generally of late, have regarded the whole mass of the brain as equally constituting the mental presence-chamber; or, in other words, as being equally contributory to the production of sensorial power. Hence it was maintained by Dr. Priestley, not only that the brain at large is the grand sensorium, or residence of the mind, but that the quantity of intelligence, in every instance possessed, depends upon the quantity of the brain compared with the bulk of the respective animal: and Dr. Soemering, a German physician of considerable ingenuity, pursuing the same idea, has attempted to prove, by a variety of observations and experiments, that the degree of intelligibility is always in proportion to the bulk of the brain compared with that of the nerves; the comparison, in both instances, accounting for the superiority of intellect in man: while Dr. Gall, of Vienna, whose lectures on cranioscopy were lately suppressed by the emperor of Germany, as supposed to be derogatory to various doctrines of the Catholic religion, at the same time that he apprehended the entire brain to be of equal and essential service in the production of general intelligence, imagined also that different portions of this prodigious viscus are appropriated to different passions and affections, and that the excess of such passions and affections was in proportion to the inordinate bulk of those parts which engendered them: whence he conceived the idea, that by collecting a considerable number of human sculls, and especially of those remarkable for any very prominent quality of the mind, he would be able, from the comparative indentations or impressions which such appropriate and augmented compartments of the brain must necessarily have excited in the bones of the cranium in their earlier and infantine softness, to determine the precise divisions of the brain, in which every affection and passion was generated; and *vice versa*, from noticing, in the living subject, the prominency which such luxuriances or excesses had produced in the form of the cranium, to carry to perfection the art of physiognomy, and ascertain the ruling passion and degree of intelligence of every man, upon his first appearance.

To examine the merits or demerits of these various conjectures, in the present place, is impossible; and I hasten, therefore, to observe, that however widely the idea may be propagated in modern times, that the brain is the chief seat of the mental functions; it cannot be more general than the belief in former periods, that the powers and affections of the mind depended primarily upon the heart. So common indeed was this latter conception for a long period, and so deeply imbued with it is every existing language, that ourselves, and every other nation, still continue to ascribe to the heart, in popular and colloquial dialect, every virtue and vice, every debased and exalted feeling.

It only remains for me to observe, that, as Epicurus conceived the entire soul to be material, consistently with what nature and experience point out with regard to every other material substance, he also conceived it to be corruptible, and of course, that it perished with the body. A divine and glorious revelation has since taught us, however, what we could have been taught by nothing else, that matter is not necessarily corruptible in any state of organization; that the corruptible body itself shall hereafter put on incorruption, and death be swallowed up of victory. Such being, therefore, the future and indubitable privilege of the material body, there is no reason why, even from its birth, such may not be the privilege of the material spirit; upon which subject, I have already remarked at large, in the life prefixed to the volume before us. Such an idea, however, whether relating to the soul or the body, could not readily suggest itself, either to Epicurus or Lucretius, or the suggestion must have been instantly renounced, as inconsistent with the dictates and phænomena of Nature. Left, as they were, to the cold and comfortless belief, that the present life is the whole range of being allotted to mortals, and death the utmost limit and utter ex-

Atque oculei, partes animantis totius exstant.
Quam vis multa quidem sapientum turba putarunt
Sensum animi certâ non esse in parte locatum;

tinction of their existence, they wisely endeavoured to improve, to the utmost of their ability, the first, and to fortify and prepare themselves against the approach of the second. The sources of consolation, which were open to them, are still open to us, and by no means unworthy of our attention; although, with the christian scriptures in our hands, they are not the only, nor even the richest, consolations which are addressed to us. With these sources the present book concludes, and I think I may add, that there is not a reader, whatever be his religious creed, who, upon a perusal of them, will not derive an equal degree of gratification and improvement. The celebrated Essay on Man, by Mr. Pope, is founded on the same principles, and altogether as destitute in its appeal to a state of future existence; but the motives to contentment and resignation, advanced by Pope, bear no comparison with those exhibited by Lucretius. They are less animated, less cogent, less interesting, and less applicable. See note on Book II. v. 874.

Ver. 100. *First, then, the mind,——*
*Forms of this mortal make a part as clear*
*As the keen eye, the finger, or the foot.*] Mr. Locke's sentiments upon this subject are known to every one. Locke was an immaterialist; but he appears to have approximated the doctrine of Berkeley, in denying that we have any clear idea of the substance of matter, and that all our knowledge of it results from our ideas of a certain combination of primary and secondary qualities, connected with the idea of an aptitude in such qualities to give or receive alterations. (See Essay on Hum. Unders. Book II. chap. 23.) Having thus declared our ignorance as to the substance of matter, he advances a step farther, and asserts, with our own poet, that we have no reason to pronounce matter incapable of thinking: and that, for any thing that appears to the contrary, it is as capable of intelligence as of any other property. But why then have recourse to an immaterial spirit, if matter alone be competent to all the phænomena of intelligence and thought without it? The dilemma is obvious; and it has been repeatedly observed of Mr. Locke, that he must have been a materialist, if he had abided by the legitimate consequences of his own reasoning. The principles upon which he argues are entirely those of the Epicurean school; and Polignac, in his Anti-Lucretius, has attacked him with no small degree of asperity, and certainly, with no small degree of success, for his incongruity in this respect:

Mirari, satis hic nequeo, quis tetricus horror,
Despectusque suî, quæ mortis prava libido?
Lymphatas hominum mentes incesserit, ut se,
Corpore mortales cum sint natique sepulchro,
Mortales animo esse velint penitusque caducos.
Tantus amor nihili! tanta est vecordia!
ANTI-LUCR. B. v. 10042.

With mute surprize I mark this dread depravd,
This self-contempt, this low-born lust of death.
That goads the cheated minds of men to wish
Since born to die, and mortal in the flesh,
The soul may too be mortal, and expire.
Of blank annihilation such their love!
Their madness such!

The name of Locke is not mentioned by Polignac in this passage, although it occurs in several others: but M. Bougainville, the translator of the poem into French, who was intimately acquainted with the cardinal during the greater part of the time of his writing it, tells us openly, in his prefixed abstract, that Locke was the philosopher against whom this passage was immediately directed; and it cannot be denied, that the doctrines it refers to were his own.

As the keen eye, the finger, or the foot.
Here cleave we firm, though many a sage contends
The mental sense no part specific frames,

Ver. 104. ——*many a sage contends*
*The mental sense no part specific frames,*
*But springs the vital product of the whole.*] To this doctrine I have adverted in note on v. 100. It is said to have been first invented by Aristoxenus, a pupil, at first, of Lamptus of Erythræa, afterwards of Xenophylus the Pythagorean, and lastly of Aristotle. He was most excellently skilled in music, though by profession a physician; and to this addiction to music, we probably owe the name of *Harmony*, by which he designated this peculiar doctrine. This derivation of the term is countenanced by our poet himself in v. 140; and its meaning is thus more fully explained by Lactantius: sicut in fidibus, ex intentione nervorum efficitur concors sonus atque cantus, quem musici *harmoniam* vocant; ita in corporibus ex compage viscerum et vigore membrorum vis sentiendi existit. "As, in musical instruments, an accord and consent of sounds, which musicians term Harmony, is produced by the due tone of the strings; so in bodies, the faculty of perception proceeds from the due connexion and vigour of the members and organs of the body." This opinion Lucretius strenuously denies, by observing, that the mind may be diseased, while the body entirely escapes; and that the body, on the contrary, may lose some of its own organs or members, and yet the mind, and even the general health of the body itself, continue perfect.

Polignac, who, consistently with the Cartesian system, makes a distinction between the mind or soul, and the life, observes, that the term Harmony, as explained by the disciples of Aristoxenus, may accurately enough apply to the latter; though he also contends, that it is incompetent to express the powers of the former:

Sunt quibus haud aliud nostræ mens incola molis
Visa fuit, nisi membrorum concentus, et ipsa
Corporis harmonie, fibris concordibus apt
Sed modus est hæc harmonie, quæ vita profecto
Jure potest, at non hominis mens ipsa vocari.
Anti-Lucr. v. 923.

This doctrine appears to have sustained a kind of resuscitation among some modern philosophers, and especially in the Treatise Du Droit Naturel, Civil, et Politique of M. Luzac, who not only regards the frame of man, and other animals, but the frame of the universe at large, as a sort of musical organ or instrument, the concordant and accumulated action of whose different parts or agents, like Aristoxenus, he denominates *Harmony*. "Concerts of music," says he, "afford a clear example: you perceive harmony in music, when different tones, obtained by the touch of various instruments, excite one general sound, a compound of the whole." This observation he applies to the operations of nature at large, the irregularities of which, resulting from inundations, earthquakes, volcanos, tempests, and similar evils, M. Luzac considers as the dissonances occasionally introduced into music to heighten the harmony of the entire system. With respect to the harmony of the human frame, individually contemplated, or the concordant action of different parts of the body, he observes, "it may be said, that of this principle I have merely a confused notion; and I admit it, if the assertion imply, that I have neither a perfect, nor a distinct, nor an entire comprehension of what produces this harmony, in what it consists, how it acts.—I know not what produces the harmony of various musical instruments heard simultaneously; but I can accurately distinguish the sounds which are occasioned when musicians are *tuning*, from those which are produced when, being completely in tune, and every one uniting in the piece, the separate parts are executed with exactitude. When I hear an harmonious sound, whatever be its nature, I can distinguish the harmony, though incapable of investigating its cause." Tom. i. 154.

Verum habitum quemdam vitalem corporis esse,
Ἁρμονίαν Graiei quam dicunt; qui faciat nos
Vivere cum sensu, nullâ quom in parte siet mens:
Ut bona sæpe valetudo quom dicitur esse
Corporis, et non est tamen hæc pars ulla valentis;
Sic animi sensum non certâ parte reponunt:
Magno opere in quo mî divorsei errare videntur.
Sæpe itaque in promptu corpus, quod cernitur, ægrum;
Quom tamen ex aliâ lætamur parte latenti:
Et retro fit, ubei contra sit sæpe vicissim,
Quom, miser ex animo, lætatur corpore toto:
Non alio pacto, quam si, pes quom dolet ægri,
In nullo caput interea sit forte dolore.
Præterea, molli quom somno dedita membra,
Ecfusumque jacet sine sensu corpus onustum;
Est aliud tamen in nobis, quod tempore in illo
Multimodis agitatur, et omneis adcipit in se
Lætitiæ motus, ac curas cordis inaneis.
Nunc animam quoque ut in membris cognoscere possis
Esse, neque harmoniâ corpus retinere solere;
Principio, fit utei, detracto corpore multo,
Sæpe tamen nobis in membris vita moretur;
Atque eadem rursum, quom corpora pauca caloris
Diffugere, forasque per os est editus aër,
Deserit ex templo venas, atque ossa relinquit;

But springs the vital product of the whole.
This the GREEK schools term HARMONY—a sense
Of living power while still th' essential soul
No point appropriates—as corporeal health
Flows not from sections but the form entire.
Thus, deem they, springs the mind; a tenet fraught,
If right we judge, with error most absurd.
For oft th' external frame disease sustains,
While all escapes within: and thus, revers'd,
The mind oft sickens while the body thrives:
As, when the gout the tortur'd foot inflames,
The distant head still boasts its wonted ease.
When, too, sweet sleep o'er all the wearied limbs
Spreads his soft mantle, and locks every sense,
Still something stirs within us—something urg'd,
E'en then to various motions, and alive
To joy's glad impulse, or fictitious fears.

Yet more; to prove the soul a part exists
Constituent of the body—to subvert
This fancied HARMONY—mark oft how life
Mid the dread loss of many a limb endures;
While instant as the vital heat but ebbs,
The vital breath flies off—pulsation stops,
And heart, and limb all lifeless lie alike.

Noscere ut hinc possis, non æquas omnia parteis
Corpora habere, neque ex æquo fulcire salutem:
Sed magis hæc, venti quæ sunt calidique vaporis
Semina, curare in membris ut vita moretur.
Est igitur calor, ac ventus vitalis, in ipso
Corpore, qui nobis moribundos deserit artus.

Quapropter, quoniam est animi natura reperta,
Atque animæ, quasi pars hominis; redde harmoniaï
Nomen ad organicos saltu delatum Heliconis;
Sive aliunde ipsei porro traxere, et in illam
Transtulerunt, proprio quæ tum res nomine egebat:
Quidquid id est, habeant; tu cætera percipe dicta.

Nunc animum atque animam dico conjuncta teneri
Inter se, atque unam naturam confacere ex se;
Sed caput esse quasi, et dominari in corpore toto,
Consilium, quod nos animum, mentemque, vocamus:
Idque situm mediâ regione in pectoris hæret.

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Ver. 135. *If these exist, then, heat and vital air,*
*Health through the members sickens or abounds.*]
——Calor ac ventus vitalis——
In modern chemistry, *caloric and vital air.* Drs. Crawford and Lavoisier, if they were now alive, might have been, and Dr. Beddoes perhaps actually may be, surprized to see their own hypothesis so strenuously and philosophically contended for by Lucretius. I reserve, however, all comparison of the Epicurean system with these modern theories, till the poet more fully explains the essential and compound substance of the soul, and, on this account, refer the reader to note on v. 240 of the present book.

Ver. 138. ——*let such sages still*
*Hold the term* HARMONY,—*deduc'd, perchance,*
*From the sweet chords of Helicon;*——] Aristoxenus, the author of this system, I have already observed, was a musician of high repute. See note on v. 104.

Hence may'st thou judge that not in every part
Dwells the same portion of percipient power,
Nor health from each flows equal; but that those
Chief nurture life, and check its flight abrupt,
Rear'd from aërial seeds, or fluent heat.
As these exist, then, heat and vital air,
Health through the members sickens or abounds.
This prov'd precise—that soul, that mind exists
Part of the body—let such sages still
Hold the term HARMONY—deduc'd, perchance,
From the sweet chords of Helicon; let such
Still something mean whate'er that something be,
No name of theirs expresses: thou, meanwhile,
Quitting such contests, mark what yet remains.
The soul, the mind, then, one same substance forms
Minutely blended; but, in vulgar phrase,
That call we mind, or spirit, which pervades,
As chief, the heart's deep avenues, and rules
The total frame. Here grief, and terror spring,

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Ver. 144. *The soul, the mind, then, one same substance forms*
*Minutely blended; but, in vulgar phrase,*
*That call we mind, or spirit, which pervades*, &c.] See note on v. 100 of this book. Diogenes Laertius has preserved a fragment of Democritus to the same effect, ix. 44. και την ψυχην ὁμοιως ἡν και νουν ταυτον ειναι. "The spirit is the same substance with the mind." But the spirit or mind of Democritus, as I have already observed, in the note now alluded to, although material in its make, was of a very different description, from that of Epicurus.

Ver. 148. —— *Here grief, and terror spring,*
*Here pleasure plays; and here we hence, conceive*
*Dwells mind, or spirit; while the remnant soul,*] See as above, the note on v. 100 of the present book. With Epicurus, Parmenides and Empedocles agreed in placing the seat of the mind in the **heart**: while

Heic exsultat enim pavor, ac metus; hæc loca circum,
Lætitiæ mulcent: heic ergo mens, animusque, est.
Cætera pars animæ, per totum dissita corpus,
Paret; et ad numen mentis, momenque, movetur:
Idque sibi solum per se sapit, et sibi gaudet,
Quom neque res animam, neque corpus, conmovet unâ.
Et, quasi quom caput, aut oculus, tentante dolore,
Læditur in nobis, non omni concruciamur
Corpore; sic animus non numquam læditur ipse,
Lætitiâque viget, quom cætera pars animaï
Per membra atque artus nullâ novitate cietur.
Verum, ubi vehementi magis est conmota metu mens,
Consentire animam totam per membra videmus:
Sudoresque ita, palloremque, exsistere toto

---

other philosophers of the same country contended, that its residence was divided,—that the irascible part of the mind alone occupied the heart, but that its rational portion resided in the brain. Of this latter sentiment were Aristotle, Plato, Pythagoras, and Hippocrates. The doctrine here delivered by Lucretius is only a dilatation of the very words of Epicurus. Diogenes Laertius has thus preserved them: x. 66. και το μεν αυτης (της ψυχης) αλογον ειναι, ὁ τῳ λοιπῳ παρεσπαρται σωματι· τοδε λογικον, ὁ εν τῳ θωρακι· ὡς δηλον εκ τε των φοβων και της χαρας. The text itself is a translation.

Ver. 153. *Of its own powers, mind reasons and exults,*
*While soul, like flesh, can never rouse alone.*] The terms mind, soul, and spirit, as I have already observed, are generally used synonimously in the Epicurean philosophy: but when in conformity with popular language, it makes a difference; it then applies the term, mind or spirit, to that more concentrated part of this etherial substance which it imagined to reside in the heart and præcordia; and the term soul, to its more dilute and distant radiations, that give life and energy to the other organs, and especially the limbs and extremities. The commentator on Creech's translation appears to have been totally unacquainted with the physiology of the Epicurean soul; and is hence continually pointing out errors and contradictions, which only existed in his own misconception of the poem.

Ver. 162. ——*o'er all the frame*
*Spreads the cold sweat, the livid paleness spreads,*] Our poet was an accurate observer of nature, and Hippocrates himself has

Here pleasure plays; and here we hence conceive
Dwells mind, or spirit; while the remnant soul,
Through ev'ry limb diffus'd, the mind's dread nod
Obeys, and yields submissive to its will.
Of its own powers, mind reasons and exults,
While soul, like flesh, can never rouse alone.
As oft the head, or eye, some anguish keen
Sustains, while yet the gen'ral frame escapes,
So, in itself, the mind, full oft, endures
Rapture or pain, while yet the soul at large,
Spread through the members, nought of change perceives.
But when the mind some shock severe subdues,
The total soul then sympathizes: then,
Should deadly horror sway o'er all the frame
Spreads the cold sweat, the livid paleness spreads,

---

given us no better portraiture of a deliquium, or fainting fit, than is to be found in these, and the three following verses. Mason has obviously imitated them in the following description of the fate of Nerina, but I cannot avoid thinking that Lucretius still surpasses him:

So saying, her *cold* cheek, and parched brow
Turned to a *livid paleness*; her *dim eyes*
Sunk in their sockets; sharp contraction press'd
Her temples, *ears*, and nostrils.

English Garden, iv. 495.

Mr. Wakefield conjectures, however, and with some reason, that our poet's eye, in the composition of these verses, was fully directed to the following exquisite stanzas, in an ode of Sappho, preserved by Longinus:

——το μοι 'μαν
Καρδιαν εν στηθεσιν επτοασεν·
Ως γαρ ειδω σε, Βροχεως με φωνας
Ουδεν ετ' ικει,
Αλλα καμμεν γλωσσα εαγε, λεπτον δ'
Αυτικα χρω πυρ υποδεδρομακεν,
Οππατεσσι δ' ουδεν ορημι, βομβευ-
-σι δ' ακοαι μοι·
Καδδ' ιδρως ψυχρος χεεται, τρομος δε
Πασαν αγρει, χλωροτερα δε ποιας
Εμμι——.

For the benefit of such of my readers as may not be acquainted with it, I shall insert the very elegant and justly celebrated translation of these verses by Phillips. Catullus and Boileau have given equally excellent versions in Latin and French.

'Twas this bereav'd my soul of rest,
And rais'd such tumults in my breast;
For while I gaz'd, in transport tost,
My breath was gone, *my voice was lost:*

Corpore, et infringi linguam, vocemque aboriri,
Caligare oculos, sonere aureis, subcidere artus.
Denique, concidere ex animi terrore videmus
Sæpe homines: facile ut qui vis hinc noscere possit,
Esse animam cum animo conjunctam; quæ, quom animi vi
Percussa est, exin corpus propellit, et icit.
Hæc eadem ratio naturam animi, atque animaï,
Corpoream docet esse: ubi enim propellere membra,
Conripere ex somno corpus, mutareque voltum,
Atque hominem totum regere, ac vorsare, videtur;
Quorum nihil fieri sine tactu posse videmus,
Nec tactum porro sine corpore; nonne fatendum est,
Corporeâ naturâ animum constare, animamque?

Præterea, pariter fungi cum corpore, et unâ
Consentire animum nobis in corpore cernis.
Si minus obfendit vitam vis horrida teli,

---

My bosom glow'd—the subtle flame
Ran quick through all my vital frame;
*O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung,*
*My ears with hollow murmurs* rung,
In dewy damps *my limbs* were chill'd,
My blood with gentle horrors thrill'd,
My feeble pulse forgot to play,
*I fainted, sunk, and died away.*

Ver. 173. *Since bursts from sleep the body,*] In the original, Conripere ex somno corpus—videtur. Creech has totally omitted to translate this part of the power of the mind over the whole frame; and, what is more extraordinary still, the accurate and elegant Marchetti has completely subverted our poet's meaning, and represented the mind as plunging the body into sleep, instead of rousing it out of it:

e ciò senz' alcun dubbio insegna
Che l'essenza dell' animo e dell' anima
Incorporea non è, ch' ove tu miri
Ch' ella perge alle membra impulso, e moto:
Che *nel sonno le immerge.*

The proposition itself is deduced from a passage of Epicurus, in Diogenes Laertius, x. 67, ὡσθ', ὡς λέγουσι

Clouds dim the sight, the palsied tongue is mute,
Tingles the ear, and every limb dissolves.
Oft, too, from mental terror faints the frame;
Whence mayst thou mark how close the bond that knits
The soul and spirit; this exciting that,
And that, when rous'd, deep-rousing every nerve.
Hence prove we, too, that both alike exist
Corporeal:—hence, since every member yields
With quick submission to the joint behest:
Since bursts from sleep the body, since the face
Obsequious varies, and the total man
Feels the full sway profound; for nought can act
Where touch subsists not, nor can touch subsist
Void of corporeal base:—can we, then, doubt
That soul, that spirit must corporeal spring?
In all, moreo'er, of ease or anguish keen
The body feels, th' assenting mind partakes.
Thus, when some deadly dart through many a nerve,

---

ασωματον ειναι την ψυχην, ματαιαζουσιν· ουθεν γαρ αν εδυνατο ποιειν, ουτε πασχειν, ει μη ην ποιαυτη· νυν δ' εναργως αμφοτερα ταυτα διαλαμβανομεν περι την ψυχην τα συμπτωματα. The translation is needless: the text supplies it.

Ver. 181. *Thus, when some deadly dart through many a nerve,*] The whole of this beautiful illustration, including the present, and three succeeding verses, are totally omitted by Marchetti, who, following the conjecture of Lambinus, has regarded them as supposititious, and pretended not to behold in them either beauty or propriety. Mr. Wakefield, and, in my opinion, with great justice, has retained them. Virgil seems to refer to the picture they exhibit, in his delineation of Dido after she had stabbed herself:

Illa graves oculos conata attollere, rursus
Deficit; infixum stridet sub pectore vulnus.
Ter sese attollens cubitoque innixa levavit,
Ter revoluta toro est: oculisque errantibus alto
Quæsivit cœlo lucem, ingemuitque repertâ.

Æn. iv. 688.

Ossibus ac nervis disclusis, intus adacta;
At tamen insequitur languor, terræque petitus
Suavis, et in terrâ mentis qui gignitur æstus;
Interdumque quasi exsurgendi incerta voluntas.
Ergo corpoream naturam animi esse, necesse est;
Corporeis quoniam telis, ictuque, laborat.
Is tibi nunc animus quali sit corpore, et unde
Constiterit, pergam rationem reddere dictis.
Principio, esse aio persubtilem, atque minutis
Perquam corporibus factum constare: id ita esse,
Hinc, licet advortas animum, ut pernoscere possis.
Nihil adeo fieri celeri ratione videtur,
Quam sibi mens fieri proponit, et inchoat ipsa.
Ocyus ergo animus, quam res se perciet ulla,

---

Thrice Dido tried to raise her drooping head,
And, fainting thrice, fell grov'lling on the bed:
Thrice op'd her heavy eyes, and sought the light,
And, having found it, sicken'd at the sight.
Dryden.

Ver. 189. *First, then, we plm nta the mind resides*
*From seeds of matter, mean minute and smooth!* ] Polignac, as may naturally be supposed, is highly incensed against our poet for this position. It is impossible, in his judgment, as well as in that of many others, for matter, under any combination, to be ever converted into a reasoning principle; or for the same substance, which when applied directly to one part of the body, exhibits no power of sensation whatever, by its application to another, and a mere change in the arrangement of its elementary corpuscles, to evince the properties of perception and intelligence. But let the cardinal speak for himself:

En, Quinti, variis quæ motibus atque figuris
Exequitur corpus. Mutatas sæpe figuras,
Mutatos et sæpe situs intelligo: verum
Non video mentes, effectaque mentis oriri.
Quinetiam indignor, cum sic in corpore mentem
Ut cerebrum fingis formari; ex agmine quodam
Particularum omni per se mente carentum:
Indignor; ratio mecum indignatur et ipsa.
Mens etenim tua si membrum est, ut cætera membra
Corporis humani, propriam quoque suscipit escam,
Qualem suscipiunt simul omnes corporis artus.
Hæc fit nutritæ subito pars intima mentis:
Nutriti pariter ceu fit pars intima membri.
Ergo particulæ panis, quem forte voratum
Digestumque suo suscepit sanguis in *alveo*,

Mid many a bone, tremendous, winds its way,
Quick faints the spirit :—a fond wish to die
Now sways, and now the native love of life.
Material, hence, the mental frame must live,
Since by material arms so soon assail'd.

Now list attentive, while we next unfold
Its make mysterious, and to sight educe.
First, then, we firm maintain the mind results
From seeds of matter, most minute and smooth.
This hence we prove, that nought so swiftly speeds
As what the mind determines and completes ;
The mind, whose keen rapidity o'erpowers

---

Si pedibus cessere tuis, ratione carebunt :
Pectoris at mediam regionem si tetigere,
Quâ nostræ placuit tibi mentis templa locari,
Tunc disceptabunt de mundo, et origine rerum,
Ac de sorte suâ : sint corpora dedita leto,
Necne ; quid ad vitam possit conferre beatam :
Jus populis dicent, ornabunt legibus orbem,
Invida quam natura negat, positura dabit vim.
ANTI-LUCR. Lib. V. v. 531.

See from new motions, new arrangements, see,
What matter sole can gender. Different sites,
Change as they may, or figures, I can sound ;
But mind I trace not still, nor mind's results.
And hence enrag'd, I mark thee, the pure mind
Strive from the body, like the brain t' educe ;
Strive from a mass to rear it, of themselves
Whose separate atoms ne'er to mind pretend :
Enrag'd, I mark, and reason rages too.
Yet, if organic be thy mind, it craves,
Like other organs, its appropriate food ;
As through the frame each limb its food demands.
Hence thrives the mind through all its inmost make,
As through its inmost make each membrane thrives.
So crumbs of bread, once swallow'd and absorb'd,
And haply through the blood's meand'ring tube
Wand'ring—if to the foot their course they bend
Know nought of reason ; but if once they reach,
O'erjoy'd, the midmost bosom, where alone
The mind thou own'st its mystic temple builds,
Of fate they argue, and the world's first rise
And birth of nature ; whether death destroy
Or not for ever ; what may best promote
The bliss of life ; define the rights of man
And plan for nations harmonizing laws.
So problems prove what jealous nature shrowds.

Ante oculos quorum in promptu natura videtur.
At, quod mobile tanto opere est, constare rotundis
Perquam seminibus debet, perquamque minutis:
Momine utei parvo possint inpulsa moveri.
Namque movetur aqua, et tantillo momine flutat;
Quippe volubilibus, parvisque, creata figuris.
At contra mellis constantior est natura,
Et pigrei latices magis, et constantior actus:
Hæret enim inter se magis omnis materiaï
Copia; nimirum, qui non tam lævibus exstat
Corporibus, neque tam subtilibus, atque rotundis:
Namque papaveris, aura potest subpensa levisque
Cogere, ut ab summo tibi diffluat altus acervus;
At contra lapidum conjectum, spicarumque,
Nenu potest: igitur, parvissima corpora pro quam
Et lævissima sunt, ita mobilitate fruuntur.
At contra, quæquomque magis cum pondere magno
Asperaque inveniuntur, eo stabilita magis sunt.
Nunc igitur, quoniam est animi natura reperta
Mobilis egregie, perquam constare necesse est

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Ver. 195. *But what thus rapid moves, from seeds must spring*

*Most exquisitely subtile, and rotund,*—] This, likewise, is a position copied from Epicurus. Αλλα μην και τοδε λεγει εν αλλοις (Επικουρος), και εξ ατομων αυτην (την ψυχην) συγκεισθαι λειοτατων και στρογγυλωτατων. Diog. Laert. x. 66. The rapidity of motion, here contended for by Lucretius, was admitted by other philosophers, besides those of his own school: by Pythagoras and Plato more especially. Motion, however, of every kind, in the subtler metaphysics of Aristotle, was conceived a mere quality of matter, and which could not possibly appertain to an immaterial spirit. Aristotle denies, therefore, (de Anim. cap. i.) that the soul can be moved in any way, being of itself the fixt and undisturbed cause of

All that the sight marks instantaneous most.
But what thus rapid moves, from seeds must spring
Most exquisitely subtile, and rotund,
Rous'd into action by minutest force.
Thus moves the fluent stream, urg'd on with ease,
Since rear'd from atoms polish'd, and exile,
While the tough honey, of compacter frame,
More tardy flows, and ampler force demands.
For more tenacious here the total mass,
From heavier seeds engender'd, tenuous less,
And less globose. Thus zephyr's gentlest breath
Wide scatters, oft, the seeds the poppy rears,
Heap'd in the sun-beam,—while the grosser mass
Of congregated stones, or missile darts
Feels no impression. Hence material things
Move brisk or sluggish, as from atoms rear'd
Light and globose, or denser, and more rough.

Since then the mind, in every act, we trace
Most voluble, from seeds of subtlest size,

---

the movements of the body. It cannot change its place, for it has none: its residence is not in *loco*, but *ubi*. This metaphysical mystery continued to be a favourite maxim in all the schools till the latter end of last century. Even Des Cartes contended for the truth and accuracy of the position: and it was not till the publication of Locke's celebrated Essay on Human Understanding, in which he found it necessary to introduce several sections in opposition to it, in order completely to expose its absurdity, that it was by any means banished from the systems of scholars and metaphysicians. See Essay on Human Understanding, Book II. chap. xxiii. sect. 18, 19, and 20.

Corporibus parvis, et lævibus, atque rotundis:
Quæ tibi cognita res in multis, o bone! rebus
Utilis invenietur, et obportuna cluebit.

Hæc quoque res etiam naturam dedicat ejus,
Quam tenui constet texturâ: quamque loco se
Contineat parvo, si possit conglomerari.
Quod simul atque hominem leti secura quies est
Indepta, atque animi natura, animæque, recessit:
Nihil ita libatum de toto corpore cernas
Ad speciem, nihil ad pondus; mors omnia præstat,
Vitalem præter ventum, calidumque vaporem.

Ergo animam totam perparvis esse necesse est
Seminibus, nexam per venas, viscera, nervos:
Quâ tenus, omnis ubi e toto jam corpore cessit,
Extima membrorum circumcæsura tamen se
Incolomem præstat; nec defit ponderis hilum:
Quod genus est, Bacchi quom flos evanuit, aut quom
Spiritus unguenti suavis diffugit in auras;

---

Ver. 228. *So from the juice of* Bacchus, *when flies off*
*Its flow'r etherial, from the light perfume*
*When mounts th' essential spirit,*——] This description of Lucretius is highly beautiful, and in the truest vein of poetry. Blackmore has copied the idea, but the *etherial spirit* has evaporated in its passage:

The fragrant vapours breath'd from rich perfumes,
From Indian spices, and Arabian gums,
Though many years they flow, will scarce abate
The odoriferous body's bulk or weight.
Creation, Book IV. v. 435.

Ver. 229. *Its flow'r etherial,*——] Thus, Thomson:

Such its pure essence, its etherial soul.
Spring, 509.

And hence, again, we are at no loss for the true meaning of a passage in ode xxi. of Anacreon, which has been differently rendered by the commentators:

Rotund and light, its mystic make must spring:
A fact, O friend to truth! thou oft shalt find
Of utmost moment in what yet remains.
Hence learn we, too, of what attenuate frame
The mind consists; and to what trivial space
Must shrink its texture if compacted close—
That, when in death the wearied body sleeps,
And soul and spirit wander from their post,
E'en then the sight no diminution marks
In weight or figure; death usurping sole
The warm-breath'd vapour, and the vital sense.
From seeds minutest, hence, the soul entire
Must flow,—through all the frame profusely pour'd;
And, e'en when fled, still leaving every limb
Its wonted weight, its figure most precise.
So, from the juice of Bacchus, when flies off
Its flow'r etherial, from the light perfume

---

Δοτε δ' αυθεων εκεινο·
Στεφανοις δ' οσους πυκαζω
Τα μετωπα μου τικαιει.

Give me the *flower of Bacchus*, give!
Without his balm I cannot live;
And o'er my burning temples shower
The leaves of many a humid flower.

For εκεινου Faber introduces εκεινων, making it agree with ανθεων, and then regards it as merely a part of the same image which is conveyed in the ensuing verses. The whole *spirit* and *flower* of the passage is hereby, however, totally destroyed. The Italian translator, Regnier, is correct in his version:

Deh porgetimi *de fiore*
Di quel almo e buon liquore.

It was, probably, on this account, from the *volatility* of this *etherial flower*, that Bacchus is often represented, in antique busts and medals, with *wings*: and especially in the famous gem which is still in the collection of baron Stosch, famous alike for its

Aut aliquo quom jam sucus de corpore cessit:
Nihil oculis tamen esse minor res ipsa videtur
Propterea, neque detractum de pondere quidquam.
Nimirum, quia multa minutaque semina sucos
Ecficiunt, et odorem, in toto corpore rerum.
Quâ re etiam atque etiam mentis naturam, animæque,
Scire licet perquam pauxillis esse creatam
Seminibus; quoniam fugiens nihil ponderis aufert.

Nec tamen hæc simplex nobis natura putanda est:
Tenuis enim quædam moribundos deserit aura,
Mixta vapore; vapos porro trahit aëra secum:
Nec calor est quisquam, quoi non sit mixtus et aër.

rarity and its beauty. The stone is an *amethyst*, the purple colour of which is admirably characteristic of the subject engraven. Under this type, the jolly god is commonly denominated Acratus, from the name of a favourite and attendant genius upon him. The gem I have now referred to, is thus vivaciously described in a late publication: "Acratus is crowned with myrtle, ivy, and rose-buds, *with wings on his shoulders*, and his right arm wrapped in his dress. Pausanias, describing the representations of the gods which decorated the mansion of Polybion, dedicated in his time to Bacchus, mentions Acratus an attendant genius on the god of wine, and describes his countenance projecting from the wall. He informs us, that the Amiclei adored Bacchus under the name of Psila, which in the Doric signified wine. *Wine*, he adds, *lightens and exalts the soul, as wings, birds.*"

Ver. 239. *Yet not unmixt its nature, the light gass*
*Breath'd from the dying, in its texture blends*
*Heat, air, and vapour, each with each combin'd*]

Chemistry is daily becoming so popular a pursuit, as well for entertainment as profit, in almost every art and science, and its own technical dialect is hence so perpetually and imperceptibly blending with colloquial language, that it is perhaps unnecessary to offer any apology for the introduction of the term gass, since every one is acquainted with its meaning, and there is no other term in modern speech that will so forcibly express the import of the Latin phrase here adopted by our poet—*tenuis aura*. We come now to the analysis of the Epicurean soul; in explaining which, if the student of Lavoisier should in some instances trace an erroneous chemistry, he will, nevertheless, be astonished at the general resemblance which it bears to this boasted theory of the present day; and will be truly surprized to find himself so much at home whilst in company with a poet and a philosopher who flourished nearly two thousand years ago.

The sentient principle then, upon the Epicurean hypothesis, is a system or combination of gasses

When mounts th' essential spirit, or from man
Th' excreted lymph exhales—the curious eye
Nought marks diminish'd,—the same weight survives,
The same fixt bulk, since from minutest seeds
Springs the light scent, th' etherial spirit springs.
Hence doubly flows it why the mind's pure frame
Must, too, be rear'd from seeds of subtlest size,—
Hence, as its flight no visual change creates,
But bulk alike, and substance still endure.
Yet not unmixt its nature: the light gass
Breath'd from the dying, in its texture blends
Heat, air, and vapour, ever each with each

---

communicated to the lungs and heart from the air of the atmosphere, in the act of respiration; and either secerned or separated by the operation of these organs. Of these various gasses, our poet enumerates four:—"heat, air, and vapour," as specified in v. 241 of the present book, and a substance so recondite in its nature, and fugitive in its action, as totally to elude all power of visual detection, and hence, to have had no specific name appropriated to it; but whose existence, he tells us, is as certain, from the effects it is traced to exhibit, as that of any other gass or aura whatever; which consists of "the lightest and most attenuate atoms;" and is, consequently, excited into the fleetest motion with the utmost ease. See v. 248—252. Our poet afterwards asserts, v. 283, that this nameless aura is of infinitely more consequence than any of the rest, towards the production of perception and the preservation of life:

Far from all vision this profoundly lurks,
Through the whole system's utmost depth diffus'd,
And lives, as soul of e'en the soul itself.

From the prime necessity of air to the existence of man, that part of him which is alone capable of determining whether he do, or do not exist, has, in all ages, and among all people, derived one of its most common names from this fluid, and is alternately denominated *breath*, *spirit*, and *air*, terms in themselves convertible, and etymologically the same. Thus, in the creation of the firſt parent of the human race, we are told, Gen. ii. 7, that God "*breathed* into his nostrils the *breath* of life, and he became a *living* soul." The term *blood* was often, indeed, in a manner somewhat similar, employed, as I have already observed in the note on v. 46 of this book, to import the life of sentient beings; but was always restrained to the simple phænomenon of existence, or to the signification of that part of the percipient principle which immaterialists intend by the *animal*, in opposition to the *intelligent soul*; while the words *air*, *breath*, *spirit*, have been uniformly applied as synonymous denominations for the mind, or thinking principle, the *mens animi* of our poet.

Rara quod ejus enim constat natura, necesse est
Aëris inter eum primordia multa moveri.

Such has been the language, and such the popular idea of all ages; but Epicurus is the first philosopher upon record who attempted to reconcile the general belief and language of mankind with natural phænomena, and to develop, with the penetrative ken of science, the constituent parts of that aërial substance from which the sentient principle was supposed to be derived; to trace their separation or secretion; and to apportion to each its relative power in the production or renovation of life, perception, and intelligence.

Such being a summary of the Epicurean doctrine upon this subject, I shall next, as briefly as possible, compare it with what has been advanced in more modern times, and since chemistry has been connected with physiological pursuits.

And here, the first thing I shall notice is the position of Lucretius, that the body derives the whole of its elementary heat, now denominated *caloric*, univocally with his own term *calor*, from respirable, or atmospheric air. The cause of animal heat was never fully or scientifically developed, till the celebrated treatise of the late Dr. Crawford appeared on this subject, about fifteen years ago. Prior to this æra, it was attempted to be accounted for in various, and indeed contradictory ways: some attributing it to the reciprocal friction of the different particles of blood; others, to their friction against the sides of their vessels: some referring it to the action of the solids of the body against the solids; others, again, to fermentations, supposed to be perpetually occurring through the whole system. But none of these solutions were satisfactory, and every one in turn yielded to the rest. The experiments, however, of Dr. Crawford, but more especially those of Lavoisier, who has perfected this theory, while they confute the conjectures hazarded by every former philosopher from Hippocrates to Cullen, establish, upon the firmest basis, the hypothesis advanced by our poet; and resolve the phænomenon of animal heat into atmospheric air, inhaled in the act of respiration, and chemically decompounded in its passage through the lungs.

The atmosphere is a vast laboratory, in which innumerable processes of analysis, solution, precipitation, and combination, are incessantly taking place. The air itself is a confused mixture of particles ejected from animal, vegetable, and mineral substances, and more especially from water, either entire or decomposed, through which the fluids of light, heat, and electricity, as well as an infinitude of other gasses, are continually passing and repassing. Vapour, therefore, of some kind or another, must, at all times, constitute an essential part of atmospheric air, yet the portion it constitutes is but small, seldom, in general, exceeding a hundredth part of the whole: the rest consisting of elementary heat, or caloric, a most active and volatile substance, largely diffused through all nature, of azotic gass, or mephytis, and of a most recondite fluid, which it is the boast of modern chemistry to have discovered characteristically; which, when separated, is found to be three or four times purer than atmospheric air in the gross, and will hence preserve combustion and animal life three or four times as long. This mysterious gass, though suspected by modern chemists, from the era of Van Helmont, was by no means fully traced, or its properties fairly specificated, till the experiments of Dr. Priestley gave it "a local habitation and a name:" for he obtained it from a variety of substances in a pure and uncombined state, and denominated it *dephlogisticated* air; adverting, in this appellation, to a system of his own founding, and known by the phrase of the phlogistic system. It soon, however, became a matter of great doubt, among contemporary chemists, whether there were any such thing as phlogiston in nature; and hence Lavoisier banished the name altogether from the French school of chemistry, and re-denominated the newly-discovered aura, vital air, or oxygen. Oxygen, in its state of purity, and freed from every other substance, is never volatile, but remains fixed to the body it inhabits; yet combined with the elementary heat or caloric of the atmosphere, it is volatized instantaneously, and exhibits itself by a thousand magnificent and stupendous properties. It is this, indeed, that gives

Compacted; vapour, in its ample pores,
Absorbing heat, and heat etherial air.

life and spirit to the whole atmosphere; for, when once abstracted, atmospheric air becomes totally unfit for the purposes of respiration, vegetation, or combustion. It occupies about a fourth part of the common air of the atmosphere: the remainder of which, as incapable of supporting the phænomena of animal life, is denominated mephytis, or azotic gass: and which, as filling nearly three quarters of the atmosphere, may be well entitled to the appellation of *air* alone.

Respiration, then, is an action contributing to the renovation of life by the communication of atmospheric air to the præcordia; the air so communicated, in a manner, to the present moment undetermined, becoming hereby decomposed or separated into four, or perhaps a greater number of simpler gasses, of which each contributes, in a greater or less degree, to the preservation of life and sensation; and especially the caloric, which seems to afford that continual supply of heat that is absolutely necessary, from the freedom with which every individual member parts with its heat to circumjacent and external substances; and more especially still, the oxygen, which, by Spallanzani and Girtanner, is supposed to stimulate the heart itself into action, and to be the immediate cause of all muscular irritability, and consequently of vitality itself. A small portion, however, of this important gass, we detect returning from the lungs in the act of expiration, combined with a substance generated in the blood; and which, from its resemblance to various properties of charcoal, the French chemists have named carbon; the fluid produced from this union, and discharged in expiration, is denominated carbonic acid gass.

I pretend not to affirm what was the immediate aura understood by Lucretius as the fourth and most important substance in the composition of the animal spirit; and which, he tells us, was so recondite as to be incapable of being traced otherwise than by its effects. To the oxygenous and the galvanic gass it has an equal and an astonishingly striking resemblance. If we suppose our poet intended something like the former, although he has not given it its modern name, he has described the very thing itself, endowed it with its characteristic properties, asserted its entire supremacy, and established it in its immediate seat of empire, the heart and lungs. He has given us, indeed, whether we allow this to be a fact or not, as complete a statement of the gasses of which the animal breath or spirit consists, as if he had lived in the present day. And what is more extraordinary still, though he enumerates the three substances of heat, air, and vapour, as fluids rejected in the act of expiration, he makes no mention of the return of this fourth, and, in his era, unnamed substance; while, nevertheless, as already observed, he deems it the most powerful agent in the composite spirit inhaled, and the sensorial faculty engendered. The following table of the Epicurean and Lavoisierian analysis of respirable air, will still more clearly point out the resemblance between them:

| Respirable air of Lucretius contains | Respirable air of Lavoisier contains |
|---|---|
| Calor; | Caloric; |
| Vapor; | Vapour,—exhalation from water, and other substances; |
| Aër; | Azote, occupying three-fourths of the whole atmosphere, and hence, more properly than any other simple fluid, denominated *air*; |
| Unnamed; but which is of far more importance than all the rest to the renewal and prolongation of animal life, eluding all sensible investigation, and only traced from its effects. | Oxygen, without which it is impossible for life to subsist: the boast of modern chemistry, and which was totally devoid of name and generic character till the present era. |

Jam triplex animi est igitur natura reperta:
Nec tamen hæc sat sunt ad sensum cuncta creandum;

It must be confessed, however, that even oxygen itself, although generally supposed at one time, and even at the present moment by Humboldt, and several other chemists, to be the sole cause of fibrous irritability, was never conceived altogether competent to the production of muscular motion and sensation: it approximated the development of the vital spirit, but did not completely unfold it. Hence other gasses have alternately been glanced at, as affording the chief fomes of this recondite and attenuate power. Electricity has been principally studied with this express view; and the study has, at length, been crowned with a success, which, though by no means perfect, opens to us, perhaps, the way to perfection. In consequence of the experiments of Cotugno, Vassali-Eandi, Galvani, Volta, and many other celebrated philosophers, it has ultimately been demonstrated, that animals are capable of generating or exciting an electric aura in their own bodies, as well as of receiving it from without; that this electric aura is possest of all, or nearly all, the properties of common or metallic electricity,—but that it acts in a manner somewhat different; whence, from M. Galvani, one of its most successful investigators, it has been denominated, by way of distinction, Galvanism, or galvanic gass: that it is a volatile and instantaneous fluid, apparently propagated through the nerves, and operating upon them exclusively; and that it is the immediate cause of all muscular motion and sensation. To recapitulate the experiments by which these results have been ascertained, would require a quarto volume instead of a limited note: many of them, however, have excited so much popular attention as to be already known to most of my readers, and the rest may be easily collected from Aldini's late "Account," and Wilkinson's "Elements."

The mode by which the body, or rather the nerves, become possest of this mysterious and truly spiritual aura, is still doubtful. That it is rather received from the surrounding atmosphere than communicated by our food, is, I believe, generally admitted; and hence, like caloric and oxygen, it commonly enters into the system in the act of respiration, and forms a constituent part of the *calor ventusque vitalis* referred to by our own poet. But it is uncertain, whether it thus enter in a state of pure galvanization, and is merely propagated through the blood to the brain, or whether it reach the brain in a more concrete form, and be secreted by this curious and enormous gland from the common mass of the blood that passes to it through the carotid arteries. The experiments and observations which have hitherto been made, are considerably more in favour of the latter, than of the former opinion. In consequence of this important discovery of a sensitive, or galvanic gass, the Lavoisierian theory of respiration has itself been subject to some doubts, and various new hypotheses have been started in its stead, or rather, perhaps, various amendments have been attempted; among which last I shall briefly mention, that much of the power formerly attributed to the oxygenous, has been transferred to the galvanic aura; that the cells of the lungs are conceived to be galvanic organs, and that animal heat is rather hence derived and propagated, than from the absorption of caloric.

Into these differences I cannot enter: it is sufficient for me to have pointed out, that the vital spirit of our poet seems to have been established by the experiments of modern chemistry, and that it results from a peculiar system or combination of various infinitely volatile and attenuate auras obtained from the atmosphere in the act of respiration, and existing, like the grosser fluids and organs themselves, by a continuity and catenation of supply. It should, unquestionably, appear from analogous facts and experiments, that a soul, thus constituted, must necessarily perish with the body; and it is not to be wondered at, therefore, that our poet should have strenuously entertained such a belief. But, be the soul what it may, the Christian scriptures teach us the contrary: they unfold to us, that the soul is immortal from its birth; as they do also, that the body shall be im-

Triple the substance, hence, the soul that builds;
Yet e'en the whole perception ne'er can form: 245

mortal from its resurrection. That the power of the Deity is able to support its existence in a separate and gaseous, or etherialized state, and to continue to it the property of personality, no one has a right to deny, till he can prove that the exercise of such a power implies a contradiction. That a possession of the common organs of the body is not absolutely necessary for the production and renovation of such a spiritualized system, we may form some conjecture from the fact, that many animals, well known to us at present, and whose powers of irritability and sensation proceed alone from the possession of oxygenous and galvanic auras, are totally destitute of those organs which, in other animals, appear absolutely requisite to their production, and derive them from other means. Thus, insects in general, even those which, like the fire-fly and glow-worm, are capable of secreting light, have neither lungs nor heart, and receive the vital gasses through the pores of their skin: while the polypus, and in fact all the zoophytic order, have neither heart, brain, stomach, nor viscera of any description, but an individual cavity, or tube alone, for the purpose of vital and sentient organs. There are, again, many other animals both aqueous and marine, which have no brain, although they have a heart and lungs; while the leech is not only destitute of brain, but of nerves of every kind: it has a muscular organization, it is true, but the keenest anatomist has not hitherto been able to trace any thing like a nervous fibril. It is, perhaps, more extraordinary still, to notice that the land tortoise, which is possessed of a brain, is well known to exist for six or seven months with the total abstraction of this important organ. Fishes, moreover, absorp atmospheric air in general, not by the lungs, for they have none, but by gills, which answer their purpose; and several of them, as the torpedo, gymnotus electricus, and silurus, secern the galvanic aura, of which it contains the basis, not by the brain, but by an organ, which enables them to secern it in a much larger quantity, and at will; an organ which is a natural voltaic pile; and, like the voltaic pile, enables them to communicate it, in an aggregate state, to other animals upon contact, in the mode of sensible and often very severe shocks. In many animals, the organs themselves change, and in some repeatedly, during the period of their existence. In the moth, the butterfly, and indeed almost all the lepidopterous class, the entire insect, in the course of its very brief duration, undergoes not less than three distinct metamorphoses. From an egg it becomes a worm, from a worm an aurelia, from an aurelia an active and aërial fly. Its organs experience an equal variation, and receive and separate the vital gasses in an equally different manner; yet the animal itself continues the same, and loses nothing of its personality. Other equally curious instances might be enumerated, if necessary; but these are sufficient to prove, that a system of sensorial power, and, consequently, of perception, volition, and action, resulting from a combination of vital auras, may exist without the possession of those organs which, at first sight, appear absolutely essential to such existence; and we may hence form some idea of the etherial texture of the soul, the "*celestial body* which God giveth it," to adopt the triumphant words of the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 38, 40, when, freed from the flesh, and dropping its accustomed organs, it defies the power of death, and enters upon a state of separate existence.

These observations I have thrown out, however, rather as hints towards a future theory, than as a theory actually formed and insisted upon; as I have, also, the preceding resemblance between the aërial gasses of the Epicureans and of modern chemists, as a matter of curiosity, rather than from any idea of derogating from the claims of later periods, or a pretension that Lucretius was acquainted with some of the most important discoveries of our own age. It is sufficient to have proved, that Epicurus and his followers contended for the existence of gasses most singularly similar to the caloric, the oxygen, the galvanic aura of the present day. We must not, however, indeed we cannot, suppose, that the Greeks were unacquainted with chemistry, though they had

Nihil horum quoniam recipit mens posse creare
Sensiferos motus, quædam quei mente volutant.
Quarta quoque hiis igitur quædam natura necesse est
Adtribuatur : ea est omnino nominis expers :
Quâ neque mobilius quidquam, neque tenuius, exstat,
Nec magis est parvis et lævibus ex elementis ;
Sensiferos motus quæ didit prima per artus :
Prima cietur enim, parvis perfecta figuris ;
Inde calor motus, et venti cæca potestas,
Adcipit ; inde aër : inde omnia mobilitantur :
Concutitur sanguis, tum viscera persentiscunt

---

no name by which to express such a science: it was, on the contrary, a subject they sedulously cultivated, both as a branch of philosophy, and an object of trade. In the advance of the present poem, the reader will meet with various proofs of the truth of this observation; see, especially, notes on Book IV. v. 327, and 1046; and many more might be easily adduced in the present note, if I had not already extended it to too great a length. Those, who are desirous of pursuing the subject, may advantageously consult an Italian work, printed at Parma in 1799, in seven volumes quarto, entitled "Dell'Origine, Progressi, e Stato attuale d'ogni Litteratura," by the abate D. Giovan. Andres, who has examined this topic with a large share of erudition, and, in his fifth volume, quotes from a very curious and valuable manuscript in St. Mark's library at Venice, which contains a list of the Greek chemists, and the characters they employed. The date of this MS., it appears, is uncertain, but it affords incontrovertible proofs of a high antiquity.

The conception, by Epicurus, of a gass similar to the oxygenous, or galvanic, is not more wonderful than that by Nicetus of Syracuse, and several Pythagorean philosophers, to whose conjectures I have already adverted, of many of the most important principles of the Copernican theory; such, for example, as that the sun is situated in the centre of the solar system, the rotation of the earth on her axis, and her annual revolution around the central fire: that her shape is spheroidal, and admits of antipodes; and that the moon, and other planets, are habitable. But what will the unlearned reader say, when he finds that even the meteoric stones, or those which are now traced to have fallen from the heavens, and are at this moment, *for the first time*, as is commonly supposed, exciting great attention in the philosophic world, are not a new discovery, and were known to mankind upwards of four hundred years before the birth of our Saviour; were as differently accounted for by the sages of that early æra, as they are in our own day; and their fall capable of being foretold by some of them, and especially by Anaxagoras, who predicted the descent of a very large stone that fell accordingly on the banks of the Ægos in Thrace. This fact and prediction are equally re-

For nought in each subsists of pow'r t' excite
Those sensile motions whence perception flows.
Hence some fourth substance, doubtless, must we deem,
Conjoint existing; which, though void of name,
Springs from minutest atoms, lightest most
And most attenuate; deep-endow'd with power
Of fleetest speed, and hence, that first begets
Those sensile movements that the frame pervade.
This first begets, as form'd from subtlest seeds,
Next heat th' incipient action, vapour next
Partakes, and air posterior, till the soul
Rouses throughout: then flows the blood, then feels

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corded by Pliny, ii. 68, and Diogenes Laertius, in Vit. Anaxag. ii. 10. Aristotle, in his first book of Meteorics, supposes these stones to be carried upwards from the earth in the course of a violent tempest: και οτε, says he, ὁ εν αιγος ποταμοις επεσε λιθος εκ του αερος υπο πνευματος αρθεις εξεπεσε μεθ' ἡμεραν ετυχε δε και τοτε κομητης αστηρ, γενομενος αφ' εσπερας. In modern times, they are said, by many philosophers, to fall from the moon: Anaxagoras contended, that they fell from the *sun*; and hence, his disciple Euripides, in his Fable of Phaëton, denominates the sun, χρυσειαν βωλον, "a golden glebe."

Ver. 248. *Hence some fourth substance, doubtless, must we deem,*
*Conjoint existing; which, though void of name,*—] That this was the opinion of Epicurus, we learn from Plutarch, who tells us expressly that he admitted the existence of these four fluids in the composite spirit of man. Επικουρος (την ψυχην ελεγε) κραμα εκ τεσσαρων, εκ ποιου πυραδους, εκ πνοιου αεραδους, εκ ποιου πνευματικου, εκ τεσσαρου τινος ακαταγομαστου ὁ ην αυτῳ αισθητικον. De Plac. Phil. iv. 3. Having thus given a statement of the Epicurean soul or spirit, and its component parts, it may not be unentertaining to my readers to be informed of the opinions of the Grecian philosophers in general upon this subject, who have acquired the greatest share of celebrity, and whose doctrines were bowed to with superior deference. Cicero will save us the trouble of a deep investigation; for he has enumerated the tenets of thirteen Grecian sages on the point in question, in the first book of his Tusculan Questions. I. Some, says he, held the mind to be the heart itself. II. Others, not the heart, but that it is an undescribable something seated in the heart. III. Others esteemed it a part of the brain. IV. Others, that it was not the brain, but a something seated in the brain. V. Empedocles taught, that it was a collection of blood resident in the heart. VI. Some, again, held it to be a breath, or aura. VII. Zeno maintained, that it consisted of particles of elementary fire. VIII. Aristoxenus, that it resulted from a general harmony of the system. IX. Pythagoras and Xenocrates, that it was a number. X. Plato, that it was a compound of three passions, occupying three distinct seats: 1. Reason.

Omnia; postremis datur ossibus, atque medullis,
Sive voluptas est, sive est contrarius ardor.
Nec temere huc dolor usque potest penetrare, neque acre
Permanare malum, quin omnia perturbentur;
Utque adeo vitæ desit locus, atque animaï
Diffugiant partes per caulas corporis omneis.
Sed plerumque fit, in summo quasi corpore, finis
Motibus: hanc ob rem vitam retinere valemus.

Nunc, ea quo pacto inter sese mixta, quibusque
Compta modis, vigeant; rationem reddere aventem
Abstrahit invitum patrii sermonis egestas:
Sed tamen, ut potero summatim adtingere, tangam.

Inter enim cursant primordia, principiorum
Motibus inter se, nihil ut secernier unum
Possit, nec spatio fieri divisa potestas;
Sed quasi multæ vis unius corporis exstant.
Quod genus, in quo vis animantum visere volgo,
Est odor, et quidam calor, et sapor; et tamen ex hiis
Omnibus est unum perfectum corporis augmen.
Sic calor atque aër et venti cæca potestas

residing in the head; 2. Anger, in the heart; 3. Cupidity in the lower part of the diaphragm. XI. Dicæarchus, that it was nothing more than a mere name —a perfect non-entity. XII. Aristotle, that it was an εντελεχια, a perpetual motion. XIII. Democritus and Epicurus, a combination of most attenuate atoms.

Each vital organ,—till, through every bone,
E'en to its central marrow, winds, in turn,
The sinuous rapture, or the sense of pain.
Yet pain, thus deep within, can never pierce
With keen corrosion, but the total man
Shakes from his basis—life no more subsists,
And the light soul through every pore flies off.
Hence less profound descends, in general ills,
Th' excited action, and man still survives.

And here, in phrase appropriate, would we prove
In what firm bonds, what various modes, the make
Of each with each commixes, but the dearth
Of terms select restrains us ; yet attend
While thus our utmost efforts we essay.

Each primal substance, then, with each coheres
In every act so firm that nought conceiv'd
Can sever ; nought can central space admit ;
But as the powers they live of one joint frame.
As the fresh victim blends in every limb
Heat, taste, and odour, while the total builds
But one compacted mass, so here, alike,
But one same nature flows from heat and air,

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Ver. 258. ——*through every bone,*
*E'en to its central marrow, winds, in turn,*
*The sinuous rapture, or the sense of pain.*] Virgil has imitated a part of this, in the following verse :

——duris dolor ossibus ardet.
Æn. ix. 66.
——grief the hard bones corrodes.

Mixta creant unam naturam, et mobilis illa
Vis, initum motûs ab se quæ dividit ollis ;
Sensifer unde oritur primum per viscera motus.
Nam penitus prorsum latet hæc natura, subestque ;
Nec magis hac infra quidquam est in corpore nostro ;
Atque anima est animæ proporro totius ipsa :
Quod genus, in nostris membris et corpore toto
Mixta latens animi vis est, animæque potestas ;
Corporibus quia de parvis, paucisque, creata est.
Sic tibi nominis hæc expers vis, facta minutis
Corporibus, latet ; atque animæ quasi totius ipsa
Proporro est anima, et dominatur corpore toto.
Consimili ratione necesse est, ventus et aër
Et calor inter se vigeant conmixta per artus ;

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Ver. 285. *And lives as soul of e'en the soul itself.*] Thus, again, ver. 290:

This form ineffable, this mystic power
Soul of the soul, and lord of mortal man.

In the delineation of absolute supremacy, or where the superlative degree is meant to be emphatically expressed, such a phraseology has been common in every age and nation.

It is almost impossible to open the Hebrew scriptures, in their poetic parts, without meeting with instances of this figure. I now, incidentally, unfold the book of Isaiah, and in chap. xiii. ver. 6, I read,

הלילו כי קרוב יום יהוה
כשד משדי יבוא :

Howl ye! for at hand is the day of Jehovah ;
As a *destruction of the destroyer* shall it come.

So, again: chap. xxviii. 15.

שוט שוטף כי יעבר לא יבואנו

The *flood of floods*, when it poureth along, will not touch us.

In the Alcoran, the same duplication of term occurs as frequently. Thus, to select a single instance, we read in the twenty-fourth chapter:

والذين كفروا اعمالهم كظلمات في
بحر لجي موج من فوقه موج من
فوقه سحاب ظلمات بعضها فوق
بعض

"But the works of the infidel are like the darkness of a deep sea, which is covered by *wave* upon *wave*, *clouds* upon *clouds*, *darkness* upon *darkness*."

So St. Paul, Phil. iii. 5. denominates himself "an Hebrew of the Hebrews;" and again, 1 Tim. vi. 15. he describes the Almighty as "king of kings,

And mystic vapour, and the power unnam'd
That rears th' incipient stimulus, and first
Darts sentient motion through the quiv'ring frame.
Far from all vision this profoundly lurks,
Through the whole system's utmost depth diffus'd,
And lives as soul of e'en the soul itself.
As with each limb the general spirit blends,
Though ne'er discern'd, so subtle and so few
Its primal seeds—so, through the spirit, spreads
This form ineffable, this mystic power,
Soul of the soul, and lord of mortal man.
Thus, too, commixt must vapour, heat, and air,
Live through each limb united; and, though oft
Each rise o'er each triumphant, still uprear

---

and lord of lords." In like manner, Pope has rendered the phrase, θεων κρατιστος απαντων, "god of gods."

Γνωσετ' επειθ' οσον ειμι θεων κρατιστος απαντων
Il. viii. 16.

Let him, who tempts me, dread those dire abodes,
And know th' Almighty is the *god of gods*.

Marchetti has well translated this passage of our poet:

sta nel corpo ascosa
*Alma di tutta l'alma*, e *signoreggia*
In tutto il corpo.

Polignac has imitated it; but, as I have before observed, he did not understand the physiology of the Epicurean soul:

Nam res perpetitur quæ tot simul anxia motus,
Res ea quæ timet atque cupit, gaudetque, doletque,
Quæ sentit, varios et sensos comparat, una est
Ac simplex: ideo non constat partibus ullis.—
Quæ pars imperio sic nata videbitur una?
Quæ pars *reginæ* tandem *regina* futura est?
Quæ pars *mentis* erit vere *mens*?
Anti-Luc. Lib. V. v. 874.

For what, thus anxious, can such movements bear,
Can hope and fear, can sorrow and rejoice,
Can feel and judge of feelings, must be one;
One in itself, nor can of parts consist.—
Thus, one by birth, what part shall rule the rest?
Parts of one lord, what part be lord itself?
What part of mind to real mind pretend?

But Lucretius is no where better illustrated than in the following passage of the well-known speech of Hamlet to his friend Horatio:

Give me that man
That is not Passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core; ay, in my *heart of heart*.

Atque aliis aliud subsit magis, emineatque ;
Ut quiddam fieri videatur ab omnibus unum :
Ne calor, ac ventus seorsum, seorsumque potestas
Aëris, interimant sensum, diductaque solvant.
Est etiam calor ille animo, quem sumit in irâ,
Quom fervescit ; et ex oculis micat acribus ardor.
Est et frigida multa, comes Formidinis, aura ;
Quâ ciet horrorem membris, et concutit artus.
Est etiam quoque pacati status aëris ille,
Pectore tranquillo fit qui, voltuque sereno.
Sed calidi plus est illis, quibus acria corda,
Iracundaque mens facile ecfervescit in irâ :
Quo genere in primis vis est violenta leonum,
Pectora quei fremitu rumpunt plerumque gementes ;

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Ver. 297. *Heat springs superior in the mind enrag'd,*
*When burns the total system, and the eye,* &c.]
Lucretius now proceeds to the doctrine of Temperaments, or Idiosyncracies; and endeavours to prove, that the moral habit of man depends upon the relative quantity of the different component parts of atmospheric air that are separated and absorbed by different systems: that those which separate and absorb a larger proportion of caloric or elemental heat are naturally disposed to irascibility, and the more violent passions, and so of the rest. The doctrine of Temperaments was admitted into the system of all the Greek philosophers. Omnes antiqui, says Galen, in hoc videntur concordati, corporis complexionem animæ sequi virtutem. Tom. vi. De Incantatione. "They all appear to have coincided in this fact, that the virtues of the soul are derived from the peculiar constitution of the body." Galen, however, attributes the origin of this hypothesis to Aristotle and Theophrastus. But the doctrine of Temperaments, inculcated by these latter philosophers, and strenuously supported by Galen himself, differed essentially from that of Epicurus, as being derived from the greater or less relative proportion of some one of the four elements over the rest, in the formation of the animal machine :—substances which were asserted, by the Epicureans, to be no more elemental than any other substances, and to be alike produced from the common primordial corpuscles of matter united in a peculiar arrangement. The doctrine of Aristotle, nevertheless, took the lead in the Arabian schools of physic, as it did also in those of philosophy ; and, with the resurrection of science in Europe, mankind were universally affirmed to be of a hot, or cold, a moist, or dry temperament, according to the preponderance in their constitutions, of fire, air, water, or earth. But Galen had long before contended, that in some constitutions, there was not merely a

One frame harmonious, lest the power of air,
Of heat, or vapour, each from each disjoin'd,
Mar all sensation, and fly off dissolv'd.
Heat springs superior in the mind enrag'd,
When burns the total system, and the eye
Darts forth its lurid lightnings: vapour chill
Th' ascendance gains when fear the frame pervades,
And ruthless Horror, shiv'ring every limb;
While the pure air, of tranquillizing power,
Smooths all the visage, and the soul serenes.
Heat sways, as urg'd already, in the form
With acrid breast, that rouses soon to ire;
Chief in the rampant lion, whose proud heart
Bursts with impetuous roaring, nor can bound

---

preponderance of one element, but of two combined, and this, therefore, introduced another class of temperaments, or rather doubled the original number; for we had now, sanguineous, phlegmatic, melancholic, and bilious: the first proceeding from a mixt prevalence of heat and moisture; the second, of cold and moisture; the third, of dryness and cold; the fourth, of dryness and heat. The temperaments of Galen, however, with many of his other doctrines, have been falling, during the present century, into considerable disrepute; although Boerhaave contended that such a division was not destitute of its use in medicine: "ιδιοσυγκρασια," says he, "vel sanitatis temperies proinde difficulter ad singularia capita determinari potest; sed tamen proposita antiquis divisio in temperiem calidam, &c. aliquem in medicinâ usum habet." Instit. Medic. sect. 889.

As the doctrine of Aristotle and Galen, concerning Temperaments, has been sinking into oblivion, that of Epicurus has had various efforts made for its revival. One of the most strenuous attempts I have ever witnessed, though apparently without any direct reference to the passage before us, is in a volume written a few years ago, by Dr. Oakley of Northampton, and entitled, *Pyrology*. In this singular and fanciful dissertation, the author boldly undertakes to prove, that all the varieties of moral and physical idiosyncracies, or constitutions we meet with, result alone from the different proportions of elementary heat, or *caloric*, (*calor* is the term employed by our own poet,) that insinuates itself into the frames of different persons: and that, merely upon this difference of proportion, it depends, whether a man will be possessed of indolence, activity, wit, or madness.

Ver. 305. ——*that rouses soon to ire;*
*Chief in the rampant lion, whose proud heart*
*Bursts with impetuous roaring,*——]

Nec capere irarum fluctus in pectore possunt.
At ventosa magis cervorum frigida mens est,
Et gelidas citius per viscera concitat auras;
Quæ tremulum faciunt membris exsistere motum.
At natura boum placido magis aëre vivit;
Nec minus, iraï fax numquam subdita percit
Fumida, subfundens cæcæ calignis umbram;
Nec gelidis torpet telis perfixa vaporis:
Inter utrasque sita est, cervos sævosque leones.

Sic hominum genus est; quam vis doctrina politos
Constituat pariter quosdam, tamen illa relinquit
Naturâ quoiusque animi vestigia prima:
Nec radicitus evelli mala posse putandum est,
Quin proclivius hicc' iras decurrat ad acreis;
Ille metu citius paullo tentetur; at ille
Tertius adcipiat quædam clementius æquo:
Inque aliis rebus multis differre necesse est
Naturas hominum varias, moresque sequaceis;
Quorum ego nunc nequeo cæcas exponere caussas,

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Hence, Virgil:

Hinc exaudiri *gemitus iræque* leonum
Vincla recusantum, et serâ sub nocte *rudentum*:

Æn. vii. v. 15,

Here rage and roaring prove the lion's haunt
Fearless of chains, at midnight loud and ghaunt.

Ver. 318. ——*though education oft*
*Add its bland polish*,——] Thus, Horace, elegantly and accurately:

Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
Rectique cultus pectora roborant:
Utcumque defecere mores,
Dedecorant bene nata culpæ. Od. iv. 4.

Th' enfuriate tide that ceaseless raves within.
For ampler vapour mark the timid deer:
Quick spreads its chilling dew through every limb
In many a tremour quivering; while the ox
Proves, through his placid life, a temper form'd
From air supreme. Him ne'er the torch of ire
Maddens abrupt in clouds and smoke involv'd,
Nor shudd'ring fear transfixes; but, remote,
'Twixt both he stands, and lifts his honest front,
The trembling deer, the lion gaunt and grim.
Thus varies man: though education trim
Add its bland polish, frequent still we trace
The first deep print of nature on the soul,
Nor aught can all—erase it: ever, whence,
This yields to sudden rage, to terror that,
While oft a third beyond all right betrays
A heart of mercy. Thus, in various modes,
The moral temper, and symphoneous life
Must differ; thus from many a cause occult
The sage can ne'er resolve, nor human speech

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But education fires the mind,
Its native strength recalls,
When Genius, loose, and unconfin'd,
To Vice a captive falls.

Thus, Akenside, and in nearly the same words:

——with wise intent
The hand of Nature on peculiar minds
Imprints a different bias, and to each
Decrees its province in the common toil.

Pleas. of Imag. b. 1

Ver. 319. ——*frequent still we trace*
*The first deep print of nature on the soul,*]

Nec reperire figurarum tot nomina, quot sunt
Principiis, unde hæc oritur variantia rerum.
Illud in hiis rebus videor formare potesse ;
Usque adeo naturarum vestigia linqui
Parvola, quæ nequeat ratio depellere dictis ;
Ut nihil inpediat dignam diis degere vitam.
Hæc igitur natura tenetur corpore ab omni ;
Ipsaque corporis est custos, et caussa salutis :
Nam conmunibus inter se radicibus hærent,
Nec sine pernicie divelli posse videntur.
Quod genus, e turis glebis evellere odorem
Haud facile est, quin intereat natura quoque ejus :
Sic animi atque animæ naturam corpore toto
Extrahere haud facile est, quin omnia dissoluantur ;
Inplexis ita principiis ab origine primâ
Inter se fiunt consorti prædita vitâ :
Nec sibi quæque, sine alterius vi, posse videtur
Corporis, atque animi, seorsum constare potestas :
Sed conmunibus inter eos conflatur utrimque
Motibus, adcensus nobis per viscera, sensus.
Præterea, corpus per se nec gignitur umquam,
Nec crescit, neque post mortem durare videtur.
Non enim, ut humor aquæ, dimittit sæpe vaporem
Qui datus est, neque eâ caussâ convellitur ipse,
Sed manet incolomis : non, inquam, sic animaï

Find phrase t' explain; so boundless, so complex,
The primal sources whence the variance flows!
Yet this the muse may dictate that so few
The native traces wisdom ne'er can rase,
Man still may emulate the gods in bliss.

Thus through each limb th' impressive spirit spreads,
Lord of the body, the prime fount of health,
Thus with each limb in league so close combines
Nought void of death can sever them in twain.
As the clear frankincense its fond perfume
Can ne'er desert till both together die,
So, from the flesh, the spirit and the soul
Part not till each one common fate dissolve.
So live they mutual, so, from earliest birth,
In interwin'd existence, that apart,
Nor this nor that perception can possess,
The joint result of each, by effort joint
First kindled, and through all the frame diffus'd.

This frame, moreo'er, alone can never spring,
Can never thrive, the dread attack of death
Can never conquer. For, with aim sublime,
Though the light vapour from the tepid lymph
Fly off profuse, while yet the lymph itself

Discidium possunt artus perferre relictei;
Sed penitus pereunt convolsei, conque putrescunt.
Ex ineunte ævo sic corporis atque animaï
Mutua vitaleis discunt contagia motus,
Maternis etiam membris, alvoque reposto;
Discidium ut nequeat fieri sine peste, maloque:
Ut videas, quoniam conjuncta est caussa salutis,
Conjunctam quoque naturam consistere eorum.

Quod super est, si quis corpus sentire refutat,
Atque animam credit, permixtam corpore toto,
Subscipere hunc motum, quem sensum nominitamus;
Vel manifestas res contra, verasque, repugnat.
Quid sit enim corpus sentire quis adferet umquam,
Si non ipsa palam quod res dedit, ac docuit nos?
At, dimissâ animâ, corpus caret undique sensu;
Perdit enim, quod non proprium fuit ejus in ævo;
Multaque præterea perdit, quom expellitur ævo.

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Ver. 361. *Hence those who hold the body never feels,*
*But sole the spirit through the body pour'd*, &c.] Such was the opinion of Epicharmus, who appears to have regarded the body as a mere cage, or machine, in which the soul was included. The answer is drawn from Epicurus himself, who thus asserts: ου μην ειληφει αν ταυτην (the power of perception) τι μη υτο του λοιπου αθροισματος ιστεγαζετο πως· το δε λοιπον αθροισμα παρασκευασαν εκεινη την αιτιαν παυτην, μητειληφε τι αυτη τοιουτει συμπτωματος· πυρ εκεινης διο απαλλαγεισης της ψυχης ουκ εχ· τι αισθησιν· ου γαρ αυτο εν εαυτω εκεκτητο την δυναμιν, αλλ' ετερω αμα συγγεγονημενω αυτω αυτην η φυσις παρασκιναζει. Diog. Laert. x.

Cicero was of precisely the same opinion. See the first book of his Tusculan Questions: Nos enim, says he, ne nunc quidem cernimus ea quæ videmus; neque enim nullus sensus est in corpore; sed, ut non solum physici docent, verum etiam medici, qui ista aperta et patefacta viderunt, viæ quasi sunt ad oculos, ad aures, ad nares, a sede animi perforatæ. "For neither do we discern those things which we behold, nor is there any sensation in the body: but there are, as it

Exists uninjur'd—the deserted limbs
Not harmless, thus, can bear the soul's escape,
Doom'd to one ruin, and one common grave.
So, from their first crude birth, the vital acts
Of soul and body each solicit each
With fond contagion, from the earliest hour
The new-form'd fetus quickens in the womb,
No power can sever them devoid of death.—
Since life but flows, then, from the two combin'd,
Combin'd alone their natures must subsist.

Hence those who hold the body never feels,
But sole the spirit through the body pour'd,
Each vital fact oppose: for how, resolve,
Could man e'er deem the body crown'd with sense
But from such facts instructed and confirm'd?
True—body feels not when the spirit flies,
For sense from each springs mutual, and, in death,
Not sense alone is lost, but much besides.

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were, apertures perforated to the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, from the seat of the soul: apertures not merely maintained by philosophers, but which have been actually traced out and exhibited by anatomists." It is more particularly in answer to so false a theory that Lucretius advances his next argument:

To deem the eyes, then, of themselves survey
Nought in existence, while th' interior mind
Looks at all nature through them as alone
Through portals, is to trifle; sight itself
The creed absurd opposing ev'ry hour:
For oft the eye-ball, &c.

And it is, probably, to this opinion that Butler alludes in the following verses:

He knock'd his breast as if't had been
To rouse the spirits lodg'd within.
They, waken'd with the noise, did fly
From inward room to window-eye,
And gently opening lid, the casement,
Look'd out, but yet with some amazement.
Hudibr. I. ii. 975.

Dicere porro oculos nullam rem cernere posse,
Sed per eos animum ut foribus spectare reclusis,
Difficile est, contra quom sensus ducat eorum;
Sensus enim trahit, atque acies detrudit ad ipsas:
Fulgida præsertim quom cernere sæpe nequimus,
Lumina luminibus quia nobis præpediuntur;
Quod foribus non fit: neque enim, quâ cernimus ipsei,
Ostia subscipiunt ullum reclusa laborem.
Præterea, si pro foribus sunt lumina nostra,
Jam magis exemptis oculis debere videtur
Cernere res animus, sublatis postibus ipsis.
Illud in hiis rebus nequaquam sumere possis,
Democriti quod sancta viri sententia ponit;
Corporis atque animi primordia singula, privis
Adposita, alternis variare, ac nectere, membra.

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Ver. 371. *Looks —— through them as alone*
*Through loop-holes,——*] In the original, v. 361.

—per eos animum, ut *foribus*, spectare—

"Loop-holes, portals, or windows," and perfectly consentaneous with the following couplet from the invocation of Richmond in Richard III.:

To thee I do commend my watchful *soul*
Ere I let fall the *windows of mine eyes*.

Ver. 380. *Nor be the sacred doctrine here advanc'd*
*Urg'd by* Democritus,—] Democritus, who, if not the actual founder, was one of the earliest supporters of the atomic system, was born at Abdera, in Thrace, about five hundred years before the Christian æra. From the Persians and Chaldeans he learned astronomy and geometry: and having, by his extensive travels and observations, acquired a vast accumulation of general and profound science, he, at length, determined to fix at Athens. To this city, therefore, he resorted; and voluntarily surrendered to the state all the property he was possessed of, during his life-time, excepting a little garden, which he reserved for privacy and contemplative walks. He lived to a very advanced age, and always looked forward to death without terror. Some time prior to his decease, from a sudden and extreme debility, his friends apprehended his end was at hand. His sister was at this period engaged in the festivals of Ceres, and declared that, if he then died, she should not be able to perform her vows: in consequence of which, the philosopher requested her to supply him with cordials of a particular kind, which prolonged

To deem the eyes, then, of themselves survey
Nought in existence, while th' interior mind
Looks at all nature through them as alone
Through loop-holes, is to trifle—sight itself
The creed absurd opposing every hour.
For oft the eye-ball dares not meet the day,
The flood of light o'erpow'ring: but were eyes
The mind's mere loop-holes, toil were never theirs.
Then too, each portal the reflected beam
Must more obstruct than usher;—and, remov'd,
Th' exulting mind must drink a double day.
Nor be the sacred doctrine here advanc'd
Urg'd by Democritus, that soul extends
Atom for atom, through the total frame,
With grosser body: for as less of size

---

his life till her religious rites, which occupied three days, were completed; when, tired out by the slow approach of death, and exhausted by the pains he endured, to adopt an expression of our own poet, v. 1080 of the present book,

Quick he uprose, and mid-way met his fate:

thus having recourse to suicide, a custom which, however repugnant to the laws of nature and revelation, was by no means unfrequent among the most virtuous of the Greeks and Romans; and which, even in the present day, is regarded as a kind of religious duty by some of the Hindu casts; with this difference, however, that, among the latter, the fatal blow is given, not by the act of the worn-out patriarch himself, but by the more nervous and steady hand of one of his own children.

Ver. 381. ——*soul extends*
*Atom for atom, through the total frame,*
*With grosser body:*—] From the account here given us of the hypothesis of Democritus, it is obvious, that St. Augustin, and even Bayle, who quotes his words, were both mistaken in conceiving that this philosopher regarded all primary atoms as equally animated and intelligent. Democritus, says St. Augustin, "hoc distare in naturalibus quæstionibus ab Epicuro dicitur, quod iste sentit inesse concursioni atomorum vim quandam animalem et spiritualem." Hence, says Bayle, in support of his own opinion, St. Augustin "*ni nous permet pas de douter* que Democrite n'ai cru que *tous* les atomes etoient animés." This might have been the opinion of Hobbs, but could not be so of Democritus; for Lucretius tells us, in this very passage, that while some atoms were

Nam, quom multo sunt animaï elementa minora,
Quam quibus et corpus nobis, et viscera constant ;
Tum numero quoque concedunt, et rara per artus
Dissita sunt ; dum taxat ut hoc promittere possis,
Quantula prima queant, nobis injecta, ciere
Corpora sensiferos motus in corpore, tanta
Intervalla tenere exordia prima animaï.
Nam neque polveris interdum sentimus adhæsum
Corpore, nec membris incussam sidere cretam ;
Nec nebulam noctu, neque aranei tenuia fila
Obvia, sentimus, quando obretimur euntes ;
Nec supera caput ejusdem cecidisse vietam
Vestem ; nec plumas avium, papposque volanteis,
Quei nimiâ levitate cadunt plerumque gravatim :
Nec repentis itum quoius vis quomque animantis
Sentimus ; nec priva pedum vestigia quæque,
Corpore quæ in nostro culices, et cætera, ponunt.
Usque adeo prius est in nobis multa ciendum,

held, by the Grecian philosopher, to be endued with intelligence, and competent to form the reasoning soul, others existed without any intelligence whatever : and that the human frame consisted of equal quantities of each spread alternately over every limb and organ. The following verses of Polignac contain a just statement of this theory :

Hinc atomos per se noscentes atque volentes,
Ac simul æternas fugis affirmare, Lucreti.
Democritus quondam nonnullas ponere tales
Ausus erat, quæ præ reliquis hâc dote superbâ
Pollerent, mentesque forent a simplici vulgo
Distinctæ : qualis plebem contemnit agrestem,
Addictam officiis, natam servire patique,
Libera nobilitas, titulisque ac juribus amplis
Præcellens. Anti-Lucr. v. 300.

Hence thou forbear'st, Lucretius, to contend
That atoms, though eternal, thought possess.

The soul's primordial seeds than those that rear
Th' organic structure, so in number too
Yield they,—less freely through the limbs diffus'd.
Hence mayst thou rather deem the soul's pure seeds
Plac'd at such intervals as just suffice
To rouse alone when needful, through the frame,
Percipient motions. For full oft the dust
Blown by the breeze,—or fine fugacious chalk
Lights on the limbs unheeded: so, at eve,
The dews we feel not, nor the silky threads
By dextrous spider spun from spray to spray
That twine around us,—nor the tatter'd web
From some old roof that on the hair descends,
Nor the soft down of feathers, nor the goss
Sportive and light, that scarcely falls at last.
Nor live we conscious, frequent, of the tread
Of animalcules, or the secret path,
O'er all our frame, the busy gnat pursues.
For many a primal seed, that rears at large

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Yet some there were thus gifted o'er the rest
As held Democritus, a prouder tribe,
A race of minds, with tyrant rod that rul'd
The vulgar rabble born but to submit
To serve and suffer, while themselves look'd on
Of nobler birth, in rank and power supreme.

Ver. 390. ——*For full oft the dust*
*Blown by the breeze,—or fine fugacious chalk*
*Lights on the limbs unheeded: thus, at eve,* &c.]
The whole of this passage is translated with much precision and felicity by Marchetti:

Poichè talvolta non sentiam la polve
Ne la creta aderente al nostro corpo
Ne la nebbia notturna ne le tele
De' ragni allor che nel gir loro incontro.
Vi restiamo irretiti, &c.

Quam primordia sentiscant concussa animaï,
Semina, corporibus nostris inmixta per artus ;
Et quam, intervallis tantis tuditantia, possint
Concursare, coire, et dissultare vicissim.
Et magis est animus vitaï claustra coërcens,
Et dominantior ad vitam, quam vis animaï.
Nam sine mente, animoque, nequit residere per artus
Temporis exiguam partem pars ulla animaï ;
Sed comes insequitur facul, et discedit in auras,
Et gelidos artus in leti frigore linquit.
At manet in vitâ, quoi mens, animusque, remansit,
Quam vis est, curtum cæsis, lacer undique membris :
Truncus, ademptâ animâ, circum, membrisque remotus,
Vivit, et ætherias vitaleis subscipit auras ;
Si non omnimodis, ut magnâ parte, animaï

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Ver. 405. —— *through every sev'ring space*
*Blending, rebounding, and reblending still.*—] Our poet alludes to the hypothesis that universally prevailed respecting the flow of the blood, prior to the discovery of its circulation, and which taught that the blood, when ejected from the heart, was first conveyed by an infinitude of radiating vessels to the different organs of the body, and then meandred through them in distinct particles, affording nutriment by their perpetual motion ; a motion which was continued by the re-action of particle against particle, and occasionally by their mutual attraction ; in the language of our poet, by their "blending, rebounding, and reblending still." According to the Epicurean philosophy, the supply of sensation was conducted in the same manner : and hence the corpuscles of the percipient principle were separately diffused through every organ of the body, in proportion to the quantity it required for the discharge of its peculiar function ; the præcordia being the fountain whence such corpuscles issued, and consequently endowed in a pre-eminent degree with animation and intelligence.

Ver. 413. ——*the ice of death :*] In the original :

Et gelidos artus *in leti* frigore linquit.

In like manner, Mason, in his English Garden :

——the *frore severity* of death.

So, in an ancient poem by Shirley, noticed in Percy's Reliques :

*Death* lays his *icy* hands on kings.

Each member, must be stimulated first
Ere the keen atoms of the soul, hence rous'd,
Engender sense, through every sev'ring space
Blending, rebounding, and reblending still.
But 'tis the mind guards chief the gates of life,
And than the soul with ampler vigour sways.
For, without mind or spirit, soul itself
In no one portion through the man can live
E'en for a moment: as companion fond
With speed it follows, dissipated wide,
And leaves the limbs beneath the ice of death:
While he whose mind, whose spirit safe subsists,
Still holds existence, though th' exterior form
Throughout be mangled; e'en though much of soul,
Though every limb be lost, he still survives

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Ver. 416. ——*e'en though much of soul*
*Though every limb be lost, he still survives*
*Deep in the remnant trunk,*——] The perfection which the art of surgery has acquired in modern days, renders this description a fact, by no means unfrequent: but Lucretius particularly adverts to the dreadful spectacles which were often exhibited by the Roman gladiators; the whole, or nearly the whole, of whose limbs were at times lopped off during the obstinacy of their inhuman games, and who, nevertheless, frequently survived for a considerable time. Nardius relates, that the plundering Arabs in the vicinity of Grand Cairo, when taken prisoners, and sentenced to the dreadful punishment of being cut through the middle, lived for some hours afterwards in the superior portion of the body, by being put upon a heap of unslaked lime, which proved a powerful styptic to a great number of the divided vessels; and that, in this deplorable state, they occasionally even entered into conversation with the spectators. Virgil appears to have had this passage of Lucretius in view, in his description of the wounds and losses of limb sustained by Deiphobus, although he does not represent this hero as surviving the bloody combat:

Atque hîc Priamidem, laniatum corpore toto,
Deïphobum vidit, lacerum crudeliter ora;
Ora, manusque ambas, populataque tempora raptis
Auribus, et truncas inhonesto vulnere nares.
ÆNEID, vi. 494.

Here Priam's son, Deiphobus he found,
Whose face and limbs were one continued wound;
Dishonest, with lopp'd arms, the youth appears,
Spoil'd of his nose, and shorten'd of his ears.
DRYDEN.

Privatus, tamen in vitâ contatur, et hæret.
Ut, lacerato oculo circum, si pupula mansit
Incolomis, stat cernundi vivata potestas ;
Dum modo ne totum conrumpas luminis orbem,
Et circumcædas aciem, solamque relinquas ;
Id quoque enim sine pernicie non fiet eorum :
At, si tantula pars oculi media illa peresa est,
Obcidit ex templo lumen, tenebræque sequuntur ;
Incolomis quam vis alioquin splendidus orbis.
Hoc anima atque animus junctei sunt fœdere semper.
Nunc age, nativos animantibus et mortaleis
Esse animos, animasque leveis, ut noscere possis ;
Conquisita diu, dulcique reperta labore,
Digna tuâ pergam disponere carmina vitâ.
Tu face utrumque uno subjungas nomine eorum ;
Atque animam, verbi caussâ, quom dicere pergam,

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Ver. 419. ——*the vital air*
*Still breathes,*——] *Vital* is an epithet frequently, and most appropriately applied by Lucretius to the respirable air of the atmosphere : upon the constituent parts of which I have already remarked in the note on v. 239, of the present book. Virgil and Juvencus have both copied the expression in the following lines :

——haud (credo) invisus cœlestibus *auras*
*Vitales* carpis. Æneid, i. 391.
Not spurn'd by heaven, thou draw'st the *vital air*.

Et regina noti *vitales* surget in *auras*.
Hist. Evang. ii. 715.
And through the *vital ether* shall ascend
The southern princess.

Ver. 428. *Now mark profound : to teach thee how this soul,*
*This subtle spirit, with th' external frame*
*Begot, alike must perish,—next the muse*, &c.] Having established the materiality of the human soul, our poet now proceeds to prove its consequent mortality, and incapability of surviving the ruins of the body : nor do I remember an individual argument adduced by the materialists of any modern school, which is not here brought forwards, and

Deep in the remnant trunk; the vital air
Still breathes, and lingers out his joyless hours.
Thus, though the visual orb be wounded, still,
If safe the central pupil, sight remains:
Where'er descends the blow, should this alone
Elude its vengeance, ruin ne'er ensues.
But, if of this the least existent point
Once suffer, though the total else escape,
Light fails immediate, and dread darkness reigns.
Such the connexion 'twixt the soul and mind.

Now mark profound: to teach thee how this soul,
This subtle spirit, with th' external frame
Begot, alike must perish,—next the muse
Shall pour forth numbers thine illustrious birth
Well-worthy, and with sweetest labour cull'd.
This chief observe, that either phrase assumes
Here a like import; and that when we urge

---

marshalled in its proper post. The force and precision of the poet's reasoning is incontrovertible; but the believer in the Christian scriptures may still contemplate it without dismay: for though all the phænomena of nature point to the disconsolate conclusion that the soul must perish with the body, the uniform tenor of revelation demonstrates the contrary, and declares the soul to be immortal from its birth.

Ver. 432. ——*with sweetest labour cull'd.*] Thus Virgil, to the same effect:

Cantantes licet usque, minus via lædet, eamus.
Ecl. ix. 66.

Our songs shall smoothe the tiresome road we tread.

And Horace, with more resemblance still:

Molliter austerum studio fallente laborem.
Sat. ii. 2. 12.

Smoothing the toil severe by magic skill.

Marchetti has well translated the passage:

Versi——da me cerchi
Lungo spazio di tempo e ritrovati
Con soave fatica.

Mortalem esse docens, animum quoque dicere credas;
Quâ tenus est unum inter se, conjunctaque res est.
Principio, quoniam tenuem constare minutis
Corporibus docui, multoque minoribus esse
Principiis factam, quam liquidus humor aquaï,
Aut nebula, aut fumus: nam longe mobilitate
Præstat, et a tenui caussâ magis, icta, movetur;
(Quippe ubi imaginibus fumi, nebulæque, moventur)
Quod genus, in somnis sopitei, ubi cernimus alta
Exhalare vapore altaria, ferreque fumum:
Nam procul hæc dubio nobis simulacra genuntur:
Nunc igitur, quoniam, quassatis undique vasis,
Diffluere humorem, et laticem discedere, cernis;
Et nebula, ac fumus, quoniam discedit in auras;
Crede animam quoque diffundi, multoque perire
Ocyus, ac citius dissolvi in corpora prima,
Quom semel ex hominis membris, ablata, recessit.
Quippe et enim, corpus, quod vas quasi constitit ejus,

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Ver. 447. ——*a sense, no doubt, induc'd*
*From the light phantasms of substantial forms*
*Floating around us*—] On the mode in which external objects are capable of producing internal impressions, see note on Book IV. v. 46, where this doctrine of Lucretius is fully illustrated, and compared with modern theories.

Ver. 454. —*this flesh, the vase the soul that bounds,*] Thus Xenocrates, in Antioch. denominates the body ψυχης ΣΚΗΝΟΣ, "the TABERNACLE of the soul:" It is the very expression of St. Peter in several places; especially Ep. II. i. 14. Ειδως οτι ταχινη εστιν ἡ αποθεσις του ΣΚΗΝΩΜΑΤΟΣ μου, καθως και ὁ Κυριος ἡμων Ιησους Κριστος, εδηλωσε μοι. "Knowing, that shortly I must put off this my TABERNACLE, *even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.*" To the same effect, Cicero, Tuscul. I. "Nosce animum tuum; nam corpus qui-

The soul is mortal, this the mind includes:
Such their joint bond, their close connexion such.
First, having prov'd, then, this attenuate power
From subtlest atoms rear'd, minuter far
Than those of water, smoke, or buoyant mist,
Since much in speed it conquers, and, by force
Far less, is rous'd to action—for full oft
E'en the faint phantasms of such forms alone
The soul excites, as when, in deep repose,
The fragrant altar smokes, and vapours rich
Rise to the view—a sense, no doubt, induc'd
From the light phantasms of substantial forms
Floating around us—this already prov'd,
Judge next, since lymph when bursts th' inclosing vase,
Flows at each fracture, since fugacious smoke,
Since vapours vanish into viewless air,
Judge how the soul must dissipate amain,
How sooner perish, and its primal seeds
Speedier dissolve, when once the flesh they quit.
For since this flesh, the vase the soul that bounds,

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dem est quasi vas, aut aliquod animi receptaculum." "Study then thy mind, for the body is but, as it were, a vessel, or receptacle of the mind." Blair, in his "Grave," a poem that, amidst much low and coarse imagery, as well as much negligence of style, is frequently invigorated with bold, and enlivened by novel conceptions, has a passage to the same effect:

——body and soul must part.
Fond couple! link'd more close than wedded pair.
*This* wings its way to its almighty source,
The witness of its actions, now its judge:
*That* drops into the dark, and noisome grave,
Like *a disabled pitcher* of no use.

Quam cohibere nequit, conquassatum ex aliquâ re,
Ac rarefactum, detracto sanguine venis,
Aëre quî credis posse hanc cohiberier ullo?
Corpore quî nostro rarus magis incohibessit?
Præterea, gigni pariter cum corpore, ut unâ
Crescere sentimus, pariterque senescere, mentem.
Nam, velut infirmo puerei, teneroque, vagantur
Corpore, sic animi sequitur sententia tenuis:
Inde, ubi robustis adolevit viribus ætas,

---

Yet how much more elegant the sweet lyrist of Shiraz, in one of his most sublime and admirable gazels, which thus opens:

حجاب چهره جان مي شود غبار تنم
خوش آنده مي كه‌ازان چهره پرده بر فكنم
چنين قفس نه‌سزا كي جومن خوش اكحان اش
دوم بگلشن دضوان كه مرغ آن چمنم

Mysterious soul! this *veil of clay*
Hides thee from my keen survey:
When the moment shall I see
That *tears the veil*, and sets thee free?
Earth's *gross cage* should ne'er confine
A frame so musical as thine;
Like the nightingale, that sighs
To sing amid his native skies.

Ver. 459. *The mind, moreo'er, as every hour confirms,*
*Springs with the body, with the body grows,*
*Andyields alike to years. The tott'ring babe,* &c.]
This passage, and the six following verses, are imitated, and varied with much elegance by Prudentius:

——tardis semper processibus aucta,
Crescit vita hominis, et longo proficit usu.
Sic ævi mortalis habet se mobilis ordo,
Sic variat natura vices. Infantia repit;
Infirmus titubat pueri gressusque, animusque;
Sanguine præcalido fervet nervosa juventa;
Mox stabilita venit maturi roboris ætas;
Ultima, consiliis melior, sed viribus ægra,
Corpore succumbit, mentem purgata, senectus.
Contr. Sym. ii. 315.

By tardy steps, and many a thrifty year,
Augments the life of mortals. Nature thus
Leads the fair round, the varying order leads.
First crawls the baby: next, with tottering foot,
And mind as tottering, moves the puny boy:
Then youth advances with o'erboiling blood
Robust and sanguine: manhood now succeeds
Firm and mature; and, last, experienc'd age,
Feeble in frame, but deep with wisdom fraught.

With this, the reader may compare the progress of life, as drawn by our own immortal Shakspeare.

Bounds it no more when bruis'd by foreign force,
Or of its life-blood robb'd,—how canst thou deem
Th' unsolid ether, or that aught more rare
Than flesh itself, the soul can e'er confine?
The mind, moreo'er, as every hour confirms,
Springs with the body, with the body grows,
And yields alike to years. The tott'ring babe,
Weakly of limb, betrays a mind as weak:
But, as his strength matures, his vigorous soul

---

The description is in every one's recollection, and is far more detailed than either that of Lucretius, or his imitator:

At first the infant
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel,
And shining morning-face, creeping like snail,
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover, &c.

——Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is *second childishness, and mere oblivion*,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, *sans every thing*.

Polignac, in copying and enlarging upon Lucretius, has given us this last age of Shakspeare as correctly as though he had had it in his recollection at the time:

Densior it sanguis, concrescit vapidus humor,
Durescunt fibræ, flaccescunt denique nervi,
Cor titubat, nec jam radiat vitalibus auris
Thesaurus capiti concreditus; ossa rigescunt,
Fit pedibus manibusque tremor, grave pectus anhelat,
Caligant oculi, sonitus male suscipit auris,
Deficiunt vires, vox ægre faucibus exit,
Albescuut crines, rugatur marcida pellis.
Tunc vitio primæ ceu debilitatis hebescit
Machina; *fitque senex iterum puer*.

Anti-Lucr. v. 944.

Slow flows the blood, more spiritless, and dense;
The fibres harden o'er the flaggy limbs;
Close palpitates the heart; the reservoir,
Rear'd in the brain its vital ether now
Ejects no longer; rigid every bone:
Tremble the feet: the hands, the bosom heaves
Heavy;—to dimness yields the flickering sight:
Strength fails, and ear and voice misgive alike,
And the hair whitens, and the pale skin shrinks;
Till *the machine sinks gradual, and the man*
*Relapses into childhood*.

The reader, I am sure, will excuse me for adding to these parallel passages of different poets, the following, that yields in merit to none of them, from the elegant and classical Mason:

Pride of the year, purpureal spring! attend,
And, in the cheek of these sweet innocents,
Behold thy beauties pictur'd. As the cloud
That weeps its moment from thy sapphire heaven,
They frown with causeless sorrow; as the beam
Gilding that cloud, with causeless mirth they smile.
Stay, pitying Time! prolong their vernal bliss.—
Alas! ere we can note it in our song
Comes manhood's feverish summer, chill'd full soon
By cold autumnal care, till wintry age
Sink in the frore severity of death.

Engl. Garden, ii. 448.

Consilium quoque majus, et auctior est animi vis:
Post, ubi jam validis quassatum est viribus ævi
Corpus, et obtusis ceciderunt viribus artus;
Claudicat ingenium, delirat linguaque, mensque:
Omnia deficiunt, atque uno tempore desunt.
Ergo dissolvi quoque convenit omnem animaï
Naturam, ceu fumus in altas aëris auras:
Quandoquidem gigni pariter, pariterque videmus
Crescere; et, ut docui, simul, ævo fessa, fatisci.
Huc adcedit, utei videamus, corpus ut ipsum
Subscipere inmaneis morbos, durumque laborem;
Sic animum curas acreis, luctumque, metumque:
Quâ re participem leti quoque convenit esse.
Quin etiam, morbis in corporis avius errat
Sæpe animus; dementit enim, deliraque fatur:
Interdumque gravi lethargo fertur in altum
Æternumque soporem, oculis, nutuque cadenti:
Unde neque exaudit voces, nec noscere voltus

---

Ver. 470. *Must all dissolve, as smoke in ambient air,*] Thus Virgil, describing the retrocession of Eurydice:

Dixit, et ex oculis subito, ceu fumus in auras
Commixtus tenues, fugit diversa.

Georg. iv. 499.

And in the same manner, Homer, delineating the flight of the ghost of Patroclus from his friend Achilles, with whom he had just had an interview:

ψυχη δε κατα χθονος ηυτε καπνος
Ωχετο τετριγυια. Il. Ψ. 100.

*Like a thin smoke* he sees the spirit fly,
And hears a feeble, lamentable cry.

In like manner, the royal Hebrew lyrist:

Let but God arise, dispersed are his enemies,
And they who hate him flee before his face:
*Like a drift of smoke are they driven away.*

Psalm lxviii. 1.

The original is peculiarly forcible:

יקום אלהים יפוצו
איביו וינוסו משנאיו מפניו:
כהנרף עשן תנרף

Ripens in reason, till in equal hour,
As age o'ercomes, and every organ fails,
Fail too his mental powers: then raves the tongue,
The judgment raves, the total man declines,
And, in a moment, all alike expires.
Hence the whole nature of this reasoning frame
Must all dissolve, as smoke in ambient air,
Hence since, as urg'd above, all springs alike,
All ripens gradual, and together droops.
As, too, the body feels full oft the force
Of bitter pains, and many a huge disease—
So strives the mind with grief, and cruel care,
Hence prov'd partaker of one common fate.
In many an ill, moreo'er, the flesh sustains,
The judgment suffers: the distracted wretch
Now raving wild, and sinking, now profound
In stupid slumber; his fixt eye-balls stare,
His head hangs heavy, sound no more is heard,

---

Ver. 480. ——*his fixt eye-balls stare,*
*His head hangs heavy, sound no more is heard,*]
Marchetti has well translated this passage:

Sommerso in alto e grave sonno eterno
Cade il volto su'l petto; e fissi in terra
Stan gli occhj, ond' egli o le parole udire
O conoscer' i volti omai non puote
Di chi standogl' intorno e procurando
Di richiamarlo in vita, afflitto e mesto
Bagna d' amare lagrime le gote.

To the same effect, a poet of our own country:

A sleep dull as the last——
On all the magazines of life did seize,
No more the blood its circling course did run;
But, in the veins, like icicles it hung.
No more the heart, now void of quick'ning heat,
The tuneful march of vital motion beat;
Stiffness did into all the sinews climb,
And a short death crept cold through every limb.
Oldham.

Ver. 481. ——*sound no more is heard,*
*Nor the fond visage notic'd e'en of those,*—] The

Illorum potis est, ad vitam quei revocantes
Circumstant, lacrumis rorantes ora, genasque.
Quâ re animum quoque dissolvi fateare, necesse est;
Quandoquidem penetrant in eum contagia morbi.
Nam, dolor ac morbus, leti fabricator uterque est:
Multorum exitio perdoctei quod sumus ante.

Denique, cor hominum quom vini vis penetravit
Acris, et in venas discessit diditus ardor;
Consequitur gravitas membrorum, præpediuntur
Crura vacillanti, tardescit lingua, madet mens,
Nant oculei; clamor, singultus, jurgia, gliscunt;
Et jam cætera de genere hoc, quæquomque sequuntur:
Quur ea sunt, nisi quod vehemens violentia viri
Conturbare animam consuevit corpore in ipso?
At, quæquomque queunt conturbari, inque pediri,

---

whole of this very accurate and pathetic picture is beautifully copied by Klopstock, but particularly this latter part of it.

—dem Sterbenden brechen die augen, und starren,
Sehen nicht mehr. Ihm schwindet das antlik der erd' und des himmels
Tief in die nacht. Er höret nicht mehr die stimme des menchen,
Noch die zärtliche klage der freundschaft.
Mess. b. v.

His loosening eyes no more behold the light;
Heaven, earth, and all things vanish into night.
The voice of man he hears not—nor the tongue,
Dear to his heart, with friendship once that rung.

Ver. 489. ——*the pungent power of wine*
*Flies through the system, and the blood inflames,*] Thus Homer:

——Κυκλωπα περι φρενας ηλυθε οινον.
Odyssey, ix. 362.
Free flowed the circling wine through all the breast.

Ver. 491. *Why torpid grows each organ? reels each limb?*
*Faulters the tongue? rebels the madd'ning mind?*
*Why swim the eyes? and hiccough, noise and strife,*] Creech, for some unaccountable reason or another, has translated the term singultus by *sobs*, instead of *hiccough*, hereby equally deviating

Nor the fond visage notic'd e'en of those,
Who yet, yet calling back to life, bedew
With many a tear his mouth and cheeks suffus'd.
Hence must the mind too, with the body cease,
Since by diseases thus alike transfixt:
For grief, for sickness, equal, the dread work
Of death accomplish, as each hour confirms.
Why, too, when once the pungent power of wine
Flies through the system, and the blood inflames,
Why torpid grows each organ? reels each limb?
Faulters the tongue? rebels the madd'ning mind?
Why swim the eyes? and hiccough, noise and strife,
And each consociate ill their force combine?
Why but that deep the frantic bowl disturbs,
Ev'n in the body, the secluded mind?
But what can once be thus disturb'd—what once

---

from nature, and from his author. The drunken stupor alluded to in the first verse, is well delineated by Ovid, in the following:

Et stupeant multo corda *sepulta* mero.
Rem. Amor. 806.
Dead grows the bosom *buried deep* in wine.

The phrase "*swimming eyes*" is immediately imported into our own language from the Latin, and happily describes that undulatory motion which every one is sensible of in the commencement of fainting, or wherever there is an abrupt cessation, or even irregular influx of nervous power from the brain throughout the system. Thus Virgil, in painting the death of Eurydice:

Fata vocant, conditque *natantia lumina* somnus.
Georg. iv. 496.
Fate calls, and sleep o'erpowers her *swimming eyes*.

In like manner, Homer:

Τον δ' ελιπε ψυχη, κατα δ' οφθαλμων κεχυτ' αχλυς.
Il. E. 696.
The fainting soul stood ready wing'd for flight,
And *o'er his eye-balls swam the shades of night*.

Thus Pope, in the dying Christian's hymn to his soul:

What is this *absorbs me quite?*
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
*Drowns my spirits*, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be Death?

Significant, paullo si durior insinuarit
Caussa, fore ut pereant, ævo privata futuro.
Quin etiam, subito, vi morbi sæpe coactus,
Ante oculos aliquis nostros, ut fulminis ictu,
Concidit, et spumas agit; ingemit, et tremit artus;
Desipit, extentat nervos, torquetur, anhelat
Inconstanter, et in jactando membra fatigat.
Nimirum, quâ vis morbi, distracta per artus,
Turbat agens animam, spumantis in æquore salso
Ventorum validis fervescunt viribus undæ.
Exprimitur porro gemitus, quia membra dolore
Adficiuntur; et omnino quod semina vocis
Eliciuntur, et ore foras glomerata feruntur,
Quâ quasi consuerunt, et sunt munita viaï.
Desipientia fit, quâ vis animi, atque animaï,
Conturbatur, et, ut docui, divisa, seorsum
Disjectatur, eodem illo distracta veneno.
Inde, ubi jam morbi reflexit caussa, reditque
In latebras acer conrupti corporis humor;
Tum, quasi vacillans, primum consurgit, et omneis

---

Ver. 515. ——*the morbid cause declines,*
*And the fermenting humours from the heart*
*Flow back*——] Till the late introduction into medicine of the theories of vascular spasm, sthenia and asthenia, and spirit of animation, the two grand hypotheses into which the medical world was divided, were the solid and humoral pathologies: the former referring all diseases to some defect in the solids, or vascular parts of the machine, whence the fluids become only secondarily affected; and the latter regarding a vitiation of the fluids themselves as the original source of disorder; and conversely contending, that whatever injury the vascular part of the system might sustain, it was a consequential or proegumenal, and not a procatarctic affection. The act of secretion, under the latter system, was

Impeded—should the hostile power augment,
Must perish, doubtless, void of future days.
Oft, too, some wretch, before our startled sight,
Struck, as with lightning, by some keen disease,
Drops sudden:—by the dread attack o'erpower'd,
He foams, he groans, he trembles, and he faints;
Now rigid, now convuls'd, his labouring lungs
Heave quick, and quivers each exhausted limb.
Spread through the frame, so deep the dire disease
Perturbs his spirit; as the briny main
Foams through each wave beneath the tempest's ire.
He groans since every member smarts with pain,
And from his inmost breast, with wontless toil,
Confus'd, and harsh, articulation springs.
He raves, since soul and spirit are alike
Disturb'd throughout, and sever'd each from each,
As urg'd above, distracted by the bane.
But when, at length, the morbid cause declines,
And the fermenting humours from the heart
Flow back—with stagg'ring foot the man first treads,

---

compared to that of fermentation; and the whole system was conceived to be a grand reservoir, in which a thousand different kinds of fermentation were taking place at the same time. Fevers, therefore, of every class, as well as most other diseases, were supposed to proceed from some vitiated fermentation, by which the whole mass of blood became tainted; and their cure consisted in an endeavour to expel such præternatural humours from the heart, and central parts of the animal machine, through some external opening; generally through the emunctories of the skin by profuse perspiration. It is to this humoral pathology that Lucretius refers in the passage before us. It is by far the oldest hypothesis, but has long been relinquished for others; yet with respect to many diseases, and especially of

Paullatim redit in sensus, animamque receptat.
Hæc igitur tantis ubi morbis corpore in ipso
Jactentur, miserisque modis, distracta, laborent;
Quur eadem credis, sine corpore, in aëre aperto,
Cum validis ventis ætatem degere posse?

Et, quoniam mentem sanari, corpus ut ægrum,
Cernimus, et flecti, medicinâ posse videmus;
Id quoque præsagit mortalem vivere mentem.
Addere enim parteis, aut ordine trajicere, æquum est,
Aut aliquid prorsum de summâ detrahere hilum,
Conmutare animum quiquomque adoritur, et infit;
Aut aliam quam vis naturam flectere quærit.
At neque transferri sibi parteis, nec tribui, volt,
Inmortale quod est, quidquam; neque defluere hilum.
Nam, quodquomque suis mutatum finibus exit,
Continuo hoc mors est illius, quod fuit ante.
Ergo animus, sive ægrescit, mortalia signa
Mittit, ut edocui; seu flectitur a medicinâ:
Usque adeo falsæ rationis vera videtur
Res obcurrere, et ecfugium præcludere eunti;

---

the eruptive or exanthematous class, as small-pox, cow-pox, cancer, and siphylis, notwithstanding all the systems that have since been started, of different, and even contradictory tendencies, there are few which will be found to account for them more satisfactorily than the theory of fermentation.

Ver. 532. *For what once changes, by the change alone*
*Subverts immediate its anterior life.*] This is a position of which Lucretius makes a liberal and a happy use. It occurs twice in the first book, to wit, at verses 738, and 875, and once in book the

Led gradual on to intellect and strength.
Since, then, the soul such various ills endures,
E'en in this solid frame,—such various modes
Feels of severe distraction—canst thou deem,
In the wide air unshelter'd and forlorn,
Mid boistrous winds, it ever could exist?
And as the mind, like body, when diseas'd
Heals oft, and owns the genial pow'r of drugs,
Hence springs a proof that mind is mortal too.
For he the secret soul, or aught besides,
Who fain would change, must lessen or augment
Its primal atoms, or combine anew:
But things immortal ne'er can be transpos'd,
Ne'er take addition, or encounter loss.
For what once changes, by the change alone
Subverts immediate its anterior life.

Sick'ning, or heal'd, then, by balsamic herbs,
The seeds of death alike the soul betrays.
So triumph facts o'er all the sophist's art

---

second, at verse 761. It is a principle whose truth can never be disputed; and was hence advanced by our poet, with as much success, against Plato and Pythagoras, who contended for the animation of the world at large, as it has been, in later times, by Bayle, and other philosophers, to disprove the similar doctrines of Spinoza and Hobbs. The perpetual decomposition, and recombination of all things through the whole universe of matter, are sufficient testimonials against its immutability, immortality, or eternal intelligence.

Ancipitique refutatu convincere falsum.
Denique, sæpe hominem paullatim cernimus ire,
Et membratim vitalem deperdere sensum.
In pedibus primum digitos livescere, et ungueis;
Inde pedes, et crura, mori: post inde per artus
Ire alios tractim gelidi vestigia leti.
Scinditur atque animo hæc quoniam natura, nec uno
Tempore sincera exsistit, mortalis habenda est.
Quod, si forte putas ipsam se posse per artus
Introrsum trahere, et parteis conducere in unum,
Atque ideo cunctis sensum deducere membris;
At locus ille tamen, quo copia tanta animaï
Cogitur, in sensu debet majore videri:
Qui quoniam nusquam est, nimirum, ut diximus ante,
Dilaniata, foras dispargitur. Interit ergo.
Quin etiam, si jam lubeat concedere falsum,
Et dare, posse animam glomerari in corpore eorum,
Lumina quei linquunt moribundei particulatim;
Mortalem tamen esse animam fateare, necesse est;
Nec refert, utrum pereat disparsa per auras,
An, contracta suis e partibus, obbrutescat;
Quando hominem totum magis, ac magis, undique sensus
Deficit; et vitæ minus, et minus, undique restat.
Et, quoniam mens est hominis pars una, locoque
Fixa manet certo; velut aures atque oculei sunt,

Precluding answer, doubly silenc'd here.
Oft man, moreo'er, by slow degrees, we mark,
Limb after limb consume: first the pale toes,
The nails grow livid; in succession next
The feet, and legs; till gradual, o'er the frame,
Creeps the chill track of death.—Since, then, the soul
Thus suffers, nor one moment can resist
Sound, and entire, its make must mortal prove.
But shouldst thou deem, when thus assail'd, it shrinks
Back through each member, to one point condens'd—
Then must that point, tow'rds which the soul retreats,
Throng with increas'd sensation: but as this
Time ne'er evinces, it must still disperse
Like tatter'd shreds by every wind destroy'd.

Yet grant the converse, and the soul allow
In those concentrates, gradual who decline;—
Say what imports it whether wide it waste
From limb to limb, or perish from one point?
Still more and more sensation fails, and life
Less and still less its dwindled power sustains.

Since, too, the mind forms part of man, and dwells
In one fixt spot, as dwells the eye or ear,

Atque aliei sensus, quei vitam quomque gubernant:
Et, velutei manus, atque oculus, naresve, seorsum,
Secreta ab nobis, nequeunt sentire, neque esse:
Secta etenim in parvo liquuntur tempore tabi:
Sic animus per se non quit sine corpore, et ipso
Esse homine, illius quasi quod vas esse videtur,
Sive aliud quid vis potius connexius ei
Fingere; quandoquidem connexu corpus adhæret.
Denique, corporis, atque animi, vivata potestas,
Inter se conjuncta, valent, vitâque fruuntur:
Nec sine corpore enim vitaleis edere motus
Sola potest animi per se natura; nec autem,
Cassum animâ, corpus durare, et sensibus uti.
Scilicet, avolsus radicibus ut nequit ullam
Dispicere ipse oculus rem seorsum corpore toto;
Sic anima, atque animus, per se nihil posse videtur:
Nimirum, quia per venas et viscera mixtim,
Per nervos atque ossa, tenentur corpore ab omni:
Nec magnis intervallis primordia possunt
Libera dissultare; ideo conclusa moventur

---

Ver. 557. *Since, too, the mind forms part of man, and dwells*

*In one fixt spot,——*] That purer, and more concentrated collection of the soul, the fountain of all the rest, that resides in the heart or præcordia, or, according to the moderns, in the brain, Lucretius denominates the *mind*, by way of pre-eminence; bestowing the name of *soul* more generally on the radiations from this supreme fountain, or the diluter sensorial power that exists in other parts of the body. The argument contained in this passage of our poet, is brought from Epicurus himself. It occurs in his epistle to Herodotus. Και μην τε λυομενου του ολου αθροισματος, τε ψυχη διασπειται και ουκετι εχει τας αυτας δυναμεις, ουδε κινειται, ως τε ουδ' αισθησιν κεκτηται. Ου γαρ ειον τε νοειν αυτο αισθανομενον, μη εν τουτο τω συστηματι

Or aught besides of sense that governs life;
And since, moreo'er, the sight, the hand, the nose,
Once sever'd from us feel not, nor exist,
Dissolving instant—so the mind alike
Lives not alone without th' exterior frame,
Which like a vessel holds it, or aught else,
If aught there be, of bond compacter still.
So to the body cleaves th' adhesive mind.
The vital pow'r, moreo'er, of each subsists
Alone conjoint, for mutual is their life.
Nor without body can the soul fulfil
Its destin'd functions, nor the body live
Of soul devoid, participant of sense.
As the bare eye, when rooted from its orb,
Sees nought around it, spirit thus and soul
Nought can accomplish singly;—hence diffus'd
Through every vessel, organ, bone, and nerve,
Of all that breathes. Nor part their primal seeds
With long interstice, fatal to the pow'r
Of resilition; rather so confin'd,

---

ταις κινησεσι ταυταις χρωμενον, οταν τα στεγαζοντα και περιεχοντα μη τοιαυτα η, εν οις νυν ουσα εχει ταυτας τας κινησεις. Diog. Laert. x.

Ver. 576. ——*Nor part their primal seeds*
*With long interstice, fatal to the pow'r*
*Of resilition*;——] To the doctrine maintained, relative to the flow of the blood through the system, prior to the discovery of its circulation, I have already briefly adverted in the note on ver. 406, of the present book. At the error of the Greek physicians and philosophers, upon this subject, we cannot be much surprised, when we regard the impediments that they had to encounter, in the study and pursuit of anatomy, upon which the whole depended. Alexander, indeed, at Alexandria, at his own ex-

Sensiferos motus; quos, extra corpus, in auras
Aëris, haud possunt post mortem, ejecta, movere:
Propterea, quia non simili ratione tenentur.
Corpus enim atque animam serit aër, si cohibere
Sese anima, atque in eos poterit concludere motus,
Quos ante in nervis, et in ipso corpore, agebat.
Quâ re, etiam atque etiam, resoluto corporis omni
Tegmine, et ejectis extra vitalibus auris,
Dissolvi sensus animi fateare, necesse est,
Atque animam; quoniam conjuncta est caussa duobus.
Denique, quom corpus nequeat perferre animaï
Discidium, quin in tetro tabescat odore;
Quid dubitas, quin, ex imo penitusque coorta,
Emanarit, utei fumus, diffusa animæ vis?
Atque ideo tantâ mutatum putre ruinâ
Conciderit corpus penitus, quia mota loco sunt
Fundamenta; foras animâ emanante per artus,
Perque viarum omneis flexus, in corpore quei sunt,
Atque foramina? multimodis ut noscere possis
Dispartitam animæ naturam exisse per artus;

---

peace, accommodated Aristotle with dead subjects for private experiments, and enforced the exhibition of human skeletons in the public schools of the same city; yet dissection was still generally conducted by stealth: the simple touch of a dead body among the Greeks, as among all other ancient nations, was regarded as a defilement, and their cemeteries were always on the outside of their city walls. The boldest artists and experimentalists, and almost the only ones entitled to notice at the period I am now speaking of, were Hermophilus and Erasistratus, physicians who, upon the death of Alexander, were warmly patronised by Seleucus Nicanor. These iron-nerved anatomists, indeed, were not contented with the contemplation of the dry and imperfect study of a corpse: and hence, with a curiosity that has been condemned as barba-

As sensile motions fits them best t' excite :
Such as, at death, when mixt with vacant air,
'Twere vain t' expect, of all restraint devoid.
For air itself must body first become
Compact and vital, ere the secret soul
Its pores can tenant, or those motions urge,
Urg'd, during life, through all the sentient frame.
Hence doubly flows it why the soul and mind,
One in themselves, of body when disrob'd,
And scatter'd boundless, instant should dissolve.
Since, too, the body the departed soul
Endures not, but with putrid smell decays,
Canst thou, then, doubt the soul, when thus effus'd,
Like smoke flies total, every seed disperst ?
And that th' external frame thus sinks defil'd
In putrid death, since from their wonted posts
Urg'd off, through every passage, every pore,
Press the percipient seeds, from every limb,
From every membrane o'er the system spread ?
And seest thou not, from many a fact hence prov'd,

---

rous by many physicians, from their own æra to the days of Hoffman, and which acquired them the name of butchers from Tertullian, they dissected the living bodies of a variety of malefactors, presented to them for this purpose by Seleucus himself ; imagining that the changes introduced by the very act of dying were so numerous and considerable, as to render it impossible to obtain a complete knowledge of the human structure by the most accurate dissections after death. The number thus dissected by Erasistratus, I know not ; but Tertullian enumerates not less than six hundred, who perished in the same manner, piece-meal, beneath the bloody knife of his friend Hermophilus. De An. c. x.

Et prius esse sibi distractam corpore in ipso,
Quam, prolabsa foras, enaret in aëris auras?

Quin etiam, fineis dum vitæ vortitur intra,
Sæpe aliquâ tamen e caussâ labefacta videtur
Ire anima, ac toto membratim corpore solvi;
Et quasi supremo languescere tempore voltus,
Molliaque exsangui cadere omnia corpore membra.
Quod genus est, animo male factum quom perhibetur,
Aut animam liquisse; ubi jam trepidatur, et omnes
Extremum cupiunt vitæ reprehendere vinclum.
Conquassatur enim tum mens, animæque potestas
Omnis; et hæc ipso cum corpore conlabefiunt:
Ut gravior paullo possit dissolvere caussa.
Quid dubitas tandem, quin, extra prodita corpus,
Inbecilla, foras, in aperto, tegmine dempto,
Non modo non omnem possit durare per ævom,
Sed minumum quod vis nequeat consistere tempus?

Nec sibi enim quisquam moriens sentire videtur
Ire foras animam incolomem de corpore toto;
Nec prius ad jugulum, et superas subcedere fauces;
Verum deficere in certâ regione locatam,
Ut sensus alios in parti quemque suâ scit
Dissolvi: quod, si inmortalis nostra foret mens,

That through the total body lives the soul,
And e'en in body severs, seed from seed,
Ere thence expell'd, and scatter'd into air?
E'en during life the fractur'd soul seems oft
From force abrupt half-hurried from her home;
Each vital function failing, and the face,
As though in death, all pallid, chang'd, and wan.
Such the deep swoon evinces, when within
Sinks the faint spirit, and each prostrate power
Pants for its final doom. Such then the force
That mind and body oft alike unnerves
That, but the least augmented, death ensues.

Can, then, the soul, thus impotent of frame,
When once disrob'd, abandon'd, and expos'd,
Through the wide air, to every boist'rous breeze,
Can it then triumph, dost thou firmly deem,
Not o'er all time, but e'en one moment live?
Nor do the dying e'er the soul perceive
Rush out entire, when exil'd from the heart,
The bronchial tube first filling, then the throat,
And mouth successive; but at once it fails
In its own region, as each sense alike
Fails in its destin'd theatre of power.

Non tam se moriens dissolvi conquereretur;
Sed magis ire foras, vestemque relinquere, ut anguis
[Gauderet, prælonga senex aut cornua cervus.]

Denique, quur animi numquam mens, consiliumque,
Gignitur in capite, aut pedibus, manibusve; sed unis
Sedibus, ac certis regionibus, omnibus hæret;

---

Ver. 624. *Charm'd to throw off his vesture, like the snake,*] This phænomenon of the exfoliation of the squammæ, or external cuticle of the snake, on the return of Spring, is noticed by most natural historians. Virgil alludes to it in the following lines:

Qualis ubi in lucem coluber, mala gramina pastus,
Frigida sub terrâ tumidum quem bruma tegebat;
Nunc positis novus exuviis, nitidusque juventâ,
Lubrica convolvit sublato pectore terga
Arduus ad solem, et linguis micat ore trisulcis.
Æneid ii. 471.

So shines, renew'd in youth, the crested snake,
Who slept the winter in a thorny brake;
And *casting off his slough*, when spring returns,
Now looks aloft, and with new glory burns.
Restor'd with poisonous herbs, his ardent sides
Reflect the sun, and rais'd on spires he rides:
High o'er the grass he hissing rolls along,
And brandishes, by fits, his forky tongue.
Dryden.

With this the reader may compare the description of Avitus, which, if I be not much mistaken, is possessed of equal beauty:

Qualis vere novo, primis cum mensibus æstas
Præmittit lætos post frigora pigra tepores,
Evadens veterem reparatis motibus annum,
Et siccum nitido discingens corpore tegmen,
Procedit coluber; terrarumque abdita linquens
Præfert terribilis metuendum formæ decorem—
II. 126.

As when, in spring, returning heat prevails,
And leads o'er brumal snows, the tepid gales,
Fostering the face of Nature;—from the brake
When, with new vigour, bursts the polish'd snake,
Clear'd of his spoils, and eager to display
His fearful beauties in the eye of day—

Pliny seems to have conceived, that this exfoliation of the exuviæ, or squammose tunic of the snake did not occur annually, but only upon the advance of age; and that the serpent hereby, as though disencumbered of a burden, acquired, even then, a considerable re-possession of alacrity and vigour. Hist. Nat. cap. viii. But later naturalists have noticed the same fact as regularly recurring every spring, and in some species of the coluber or viper, every spring and autumn; and so complete is the cuticle exfoliated, that even the external tunic of the eye is thrown off at the same time. Snakes, however, are not the only animals that suffer an annual loss and renovation of some part of their organic structure. Our poet alludes, in the adjoining verse, to the yearly exfoliation and renewal of the antlers of the stag: and it is now well known, that the lobster, and indeed, almost all the cancer genus, as well as the common spider, and many other insects of the Linnéan class, Aptera, part with their external crustaceous coating every year, generally between the months of May and August; and are capable of regenerating a limb or claw with great ease, upon losing it by accident.

Were, too, its date immortal, man no more,
At his last hour, would mourn the sev'ring blow:
Charm'd to throw off his vesture, like the snake,
Or, like the stag his antlers, and be free.
Why, too, are wisdom, and the mind restrain'd
To one sole organ, while the feet, the hands,
These never gender? why but that each spot

---

This crustaceous coating is decided by Mr. Hatchett, to consist of a strong cartilage, hardened by a mixture of carbonat, and phosphat of lime, in consequence of which, it occupies a middle place between shell and bone, although principally inclining to the nature of shell; the distinguishing chemical character of which is carbonat of lime; while that of bone, as well as of the enamel of the teeth, is phosphat of lime. Philos. Trans. for 1800. See note on Book VI. 1101; as also, note on v. 668 of the present book.

Ver. 625. *Or, like the stag his antlers,*—] Pliny confirms this phænomenon of our poet, by observing, that "the males have horns, and are the only animals that lose them every year, at a certain period of the spring." Hist. Nat. cap. xxxii. And our own poet Waller alludes to the same fact, in the following verses:

So we some antique hero's strength
Learn by his lance's weight, and length;
As these vast beams express the beast
Whose shady brows alive they dress'd.
O fertile head! which, ev'ry year,
Could such a crop of wonders bear!
Which, might it never have been cast,
Each year's growth added to the last,
These lofty branches had supplied
The earth's bold sons' prodigious pride;
Heav'n with these engines had been scal'd
When mountains heap'd on mountains fail'd.

See, upon the same subject, the preceding note.



Ver. 626. *Why, too, are wisdom, and the mind restrain'd*
*To one sole organ, while the feet, the hands*
*These never gender?*——] The commentator upon Creech's translation, affirms the argument hence deduced, to be both false and irrelevant. The soul, contends Lucretius, is produced in one individual organ, and is never found in any other situation. "But birds," says the commentator, "are hatched in a nest, and yet live out of the nest; and a nut is produced upon a tree, and a grain of corn in the ear, and yet they are kept in granaries." Yet what is there in all this to falsify our poet's position? Is it hence demonstrated, that "the mind *is* generated in the hands or the feet," or that, in opposition to what our poet urges in the succeeding verse, "each spot does *not* exist for some fixt purpose?" The whole that the commentator has advanced, can only be advanced by way of analogy,—and the most distant analogy too; for the resemblance, if minutely entered into, would fail in a variety of important particulars. "But the poet," adjoins he, "contradicts his own doctrine:" and, for the proof of this contradiction, we are referred to Book II. v. 1008 of this translation, where he asserts,

Thus all things rise, thus all again return,
Earth takes what earth bestow'd, and, back to heav'n,
Remount th' etherial dews from heav'n that fell.

By some inexplicable error, this annotator appears to conceive, that Lucretius, in the last verse, refers to the mind or spirit, and that this would be

Si non certa loca ad nascundum reddita quoique
Sunt, et ubei quidquid possit durare creatum;
Atque ita, multimodis, pro totis artubus, esse;
Membrorum ut nusquam exsistat præposterus ordo?
Usque adeo sequitur res rem, neque flamma creari
Fluminibus solita est, neque in igni gignier algor.
Præterea, si inmortalis natura animaï est,
Et sentire potest, secreta a corpore nostro;
Quinque, ut opinor, eam faciundum est sensibus auctam:
Nec ratione aliâ nosmet proponere nobis
Possumus infernas animas Acherunte vagare.
Pictores itaque, et scriptorum secla priora,
Sic animas introduxerunt sensibus auctas.

---

a more proper term than *dews* or auras. I will quote, then, the original to prove there is nothing to justify such an idea:

Cedit item retro de terrâ, quod fuit ante,
In terras; et *quod missum est ex ætheris oris*,
Id rursum cœli relatum templa receptant.

He first mistakes the meaning of Lucretius by pretending, that he asserts souls or spirits, instead of dews or gasses, to be transmitted from heaven, and afterwards returned there; and having committed this blunder, he next avers that our poet contradicts himself upon this doctrine, by contending, that the soul is created in the bosom, and cannot exist elsewhere. But he brings Lactantius to corroborate this supposed contradiction, who, it must be confessed, has been unaccountably seduced into the same mistake, and by whose authority, it is probable, that the commentator was himself deceived. Veritate, says Lactantius, victus est, et imprudenti ratio vera surrepsit. Lact. l. vii. c. xii. de Div. Præm. "Lucretius is convicted by the truth itself, which has escaped from him unawares." But Bayle has justly observed upon the very verses in question, that, ceux qui pretendent qu'il n'a pu parler de la sorte sans se contredire, n'avoient gueres compris ses sentimens. Art. Lucrece: "those who assert that he could not speak in this manner without contradicting himself, have never understood his opinions."

Lactantius, however, has not been followed by the commentator upon Creech alone, but by a variety of other men of letters who have chosen, as implicitly, to depend upon his interpretation. Thus, in a letter from a celebrated Dominican friar to the president of the company of Jesuits, written expressly on the subject of Chinese Idolatry, we find the following observation: "Ce ne seroit pas une chose surprenante que les Chinois se contredissent eux-memes, puisque *Lucrece*, l'un des plus sçavans philosophes de la secte des Epicuriens, qui osa combattre

Exists for some fixt function,—nor can e'er
Pervert its destin'd view? while, through the whole,
Nice order reigns by nought preposterous marr'd.
So flows the tide of things, nor water fire,
Through time, creates, nor fire the sparry frost.

Were, too, the soul immortal, and possest
Of sentient powers when sever'd from the flesh,
Then with new organs must it, or we err,
Be instant re-endow'd; for thus alone
Th' infernal shades can tread the shores of hell.
Thus painters feign them, and the bards renown'd
Of ancient times—thoughtless that eyes, and nose,

ouvertement la doctrine de l'immortalité de l'ame, confessa, neanmoins, que si elle se dissipoit apres la morte, c'est, que ce qu'elle avoit de grossier, se perdoit dans la terre, et, que ce qu'elle avoit de plus subtil et de celeste, remontoit dans la troisième region de l'air ou dans le ciel. Le sentiment des sçavans de la Chine sur ce point, ressemble tout-à-fait à celui de Lucrece: ils s'expliquent à peu pres comme lui.

Ver. 632. *So flows the tide of things, nor water fire,*] It is on this, and several following verses, that Polignac observes with exultation:

Ergo particulæ panis, quem fortè voratum,
Digestumque suo suscepit sanguis in alveo,
Si pedibus cessere tuis, *ratione* carebunt;
Pectoris et mediam regionem si tetigere,
Quâ nostræ placuit tibi mentis templa locari,
Tunc disceptabunt de mundo et origine rerum,
Ac de sorte suâ: sint corpora dedita leto,
Necne; quid ad vitam possit conferre beatam:
Jus populis dicent, ornabunt legibus orbem:
Invida quam natura negat, positura dabit vim.
Res peregre adveniens id, quo caret ipsa, propinquæ
Tradet; et accipiet quod non habet ille, vicissim
Pro pudor! hæc tandem est doctæ sapientia sectæ.
Anti-Lucr. v. 544.

Ver. 634. *Were, too, the soul immortal, and possest,* &c.] This passage is consonant with the following of equal beauty in Catullus:

Sed quid ego ignaris nequidquam conqueror auris
Externata malo? quæ, nullis sensibus auctæ,
Nec missas audire queunt, nec reddere voces.
lxii. 165.

Ver. 639. *Thus painters feign them, and the bards renown'd*
*Of ancient times*——] And what was thus the opinion and usage of bards and painters of ancient

At neque seorsum oculei, neque nares, nec manus ipsa
Esse potest animâ, neque seorsum lingua; neque aures
Auditum per se possunt sentire, neque esse.
Et, quoniam toto sentimus corpore inesse
Vitalem sensum, et totum esse animale videmus;
Si subito medium celeri præciderit ictu
Vis aliqua, ut seorsum partem secernat utramque,
Dispartita procul dubio quoque vis animaï,
Et discissa simul cum corpore, disicietur.
At, quod scinditur, et parteis discedit in ullas,
Scilicet æternam sibi naturam abnuit esse.
Falciferos memorant currus abscidere membra
Sæpe ita de subito, permixtà cæde calenteis,

---

times, is the same with many of those of the present day. So, Milton, respecting the angelic essences:

——and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require
As doth your rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting, concoct, digest, assimilate,
And incorporeal to corporeal turn.

It was on this account, Mr. Locke conceived, as I have already observed in the note on ver. 100 of the present book, that even angels, as well as beatified spirits, were compounded of matter: and Des Cartes, the most strict and rational immaterialist of his age, supposed the disembodied spirit to be surrounded with a light attenuate vehicle. So, Gesner, in his representation of the ascension of Abel, after the fratricide of Cain: Der Todesengel rief itz Abels seele aus ihren blutenden hülle. Himmlisch lächelnd trat sie hervor, die geistigten theile des cörpers flossen ihr nach: und mit balsamischen düften vermischet, &c. "The angel of death called forth the soul of Abel from its veil of blood. Smiling, it advanced. The more spiritual parts of the body flew with it, and, mixing with the balsamic exhalations, which the gentle winds wafted from the flowers which blossomed within the circle of glory that streamed around the angel, environed the rising spirit, and wove for it an etherial body." In a manner perfectly similar, Klopstock delineates the appearance of the angel Gabriel himself, when descending to the altar of the earth:

——ein schwebender leib, aus heitre gebildet,
Hüllte den seligen geist in eine verklartere wohnung.

A fluent frame of clear, transparent light
Veil'd the saint spirit in his radiant flight.

But all such kind of necessary material investiture proves the soul itself to be material, or, at least, incompetent to subsist without matter, and, of course, as Lucretius justly observes, to be of the same sub-

And hands, and mouth, to the divided soul
Can ne'er pertain, nor e'en the sense of sound.

And since the total system soul pervades,
And vital action—when some blow severe
Midway divides it, part from part, abrupt,
Then must the soul alike be cleft in twain,
Driv'n with the mangled body. But what thus
Admits partition, and to foreign force
Yields e'en but once, immortal ne'er can be.

Oft, arm'd with scythes, the warlike car, we read,
Hot with repeated slaughters, so abrupt

---

stance with the body; spiritualized, etherialized or attenuated, but material still.

Ver. 642. ——*nor e'en the sense of sound.*] The indefatigable vigilance of Mr. Wakefield has restored the true reading of the original of this verse, which the unblushing boldness of some early editor, who has been idly followed by others, contorted to his own fancy, in opposition to all the books of best and surest authority. In the common editions, we meet with it thus:

*Absque animi* per se possunt sentire *nec* esse.

In Mr. Wakefield's edition, corrected from copies of undoubted accuracy:

*Auditum* per se possunt sentire *neque* esse.

Ver. 650. *Oft, arm'd with scythes, the warlike car, we read,*
*Hot with repeated slaughters,* &c.—] This powerful instrument, which was in use amongst almost all the ancient nations, is found too unwieldy for modern tactics, and has been relinquished for ages. Of the form of those employed by Cyrus, Xenophon gives us the following description. Instit. l. vi. Πολε μιστηρια κατεσκευασεν αρματα τροχοις, τε ισχυροις, ὡς μη ραδιως συντριβοιτο, αξοσι τε μακροις, κτλον γαρ ανατρεπεται τουτο τα πλατεα, τον δε ἑδρον τοις ηνιοχοις επεπηξε, ὡστερ πυργον, ισχυραν ξυλων, &c. "He provided himself with warlike chariots, with strong wheels, to prevent their being easily broken, and large axle-trees, to prevent their being overthrown. The driver's seat was formed of the toughest timber, and of the height of the elbow, that he might govern his horses with freedom from the box on which he sat. The charioteers themselves were armed from head to foot. To the axle-trees on either side of the wheels he fastened scythes of steel, two cubits in length; while others were placed beneath the axle, inclining towards the ground, as if he meaned to drive over, and trample his enemies to dust with this kind of chariot." In the wars between the Hebrews and their

Ut tremere in terrâ videatur ab artubus id quod
Decidit abscisum; quom mens tamen, atque hominis vis,
Mobilitate mali non quit sentire dolorem:
Et, simul in pugnæ studio qui dedita mens est,
Corpore cum reliquo pugnam, cædeisque, petessit:
Nec tenet, amissam lævam cum tegmine sæpe
Inter equos abstraxe rotas, falcesque rapaceis:
Nec cecidisse alius dextram, quom scandit, et instat.
Inde alius conatur adempto surgere crure,
Quom digitos agitat propter moribundus humi pes:

---

enemies, but more particularly the Canaanites, the same sort of warlike car was continually made use of: and Cowley has given us no inaccurate description of it in his Davideis:

Here, with worse noise, three thousand chariots pass,
With plates of iron bound, or louder brass.
About it axes, forks, and scythes and spears,
Whole magazines of death, each chariot bears.
Where it breaks in, there a whole troop it mows,
*And with lopt-panting limbs the field* bestrews.
Alike the valiant, and the coward die:
Nor that can e'er resist, nor this can fly. B. iv.

It is said, however, that Cowley is, in this passage, guilty of an anachronism; and the paragraph I have now quoted from Xenophon, is appealed to as a proof that Cyrus was the inventor of falcated chariots: yet it is difficult to understand in any other sense the רכב ברזל "*flaming*" or "*glittering war-chariots*, so often made mention of, and so confidently relied upon in the books of Joshua and Judges; and which, although commonly translated by the doubtful phrase, "chariots of iron," are rendered by the vulgate "*currus falcati*," "*chariots falcated*," or "*armed with scythes*." The war-chariots employed in the time of Nahum, at which period it is certain that the Jews were acquainted with the use of scythe-chariots, are described by the same sublime figure of *flaming* or *radiant*: thus, Neh. ii. 3.

באש פלרת הרכב ביום הכינו

"His chariots are *flaming* scythes in the day of his preparation."

Ver. 657. *Whirl'd in the strife of coursers, and of cars.*] This dreadful confusion of combatants, horses, and chariots, is well represented by Virgil:

Tum vero et gemitus morientum, et sanguine in alto
Armaque, corporaque, et *permixti* cæde virorum
Semianimes volvuntur equi: pugna aspera surgit.
Æn. ii. 633.

Now dying groans are heard; the fields are strew'd
With falling horses, and are drunk with blood:
Arms, horses, men, on heaps together lie;
Confus'd the sight, but more confus'd the cry.
Dryden.

It is still more powerfully delineated by the Hebrew prophet, Nahum:

The clamour of the rattling wheels,
And of the prancing horses,
And of the rebounding chariots!—
His bright sword, and his radiant spear

Severs a limb, that o'er the field it lies
With life long quiv'ring, while the hero still
Fights on of pain unconscious: his high soul
Absorb'd so total, he nor heeds the loss
Of his broad shield, or shield-supporting hand,
Whirl'd in the strife of coursers, and of cars.
From this the sword-arm drops, while still the rock
He climbs impetuous; that, perchance, to earth
Fell'd, on one leg yet vainly strives to rise;
While, at his side, his amputated foot

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The horseman lifteth up alike.
Numerous the slain! innumerable the dead bodies!
Yea, no end of the carcases!
Over their carcases they stumble.

Ver. 658. *From this the sword-arm drops,*—] Thus, Homer:

Τον μεν αρ' Ευρυπυλος, Ευαιμονος αγλαος υιος,
Προσθεν ιθυν ξιφεϊ τανυηατα, μιτατρομαιδιν ελασσ' αμων,
Φασγανῳ αιξας· απο δ' εξεσε χειρα βαρειαν.
Αιματοεσσα δε χειρ πεδιῳ πεσε——. Il. E. 81.

On him, amidst the flying numbers found,
Eurypilus inflicts a deadly wound;
On his broad shoulder fell the forceful brand,
Thence, glancing downward, lopp'd his holy hand,
Which stain'd with sacred blood the blushing sand. Pope.

And thus Virgil, in a passage which Lambinus asserts he composed with this of our poet in his recollection:

Te decisa suum, Laride, dextera quærit:
Semianimesque micant digiti, ferrumque retractant.
Æn. x. 395.

——Laris' hand,
Dismember'd, *sought its owner* on the strand:
The trembling fingers yet the faulchion strain,
And *threaten still* th' *intended stroke* in vain.

In the following passage of Ercilla, which describes the wretched remains of the Spanish army on entering the city of Conception, after its total defeat and rout by the brave Lautaro, there is a force and spirit which will amply justify its insertion:

Puedese imaginar qual llegarian
Del trabajo y heridas maltratados,
Algunos casi rostros no traîan,
Otros los traen de golpes levantados.
Del infierno parece que salian,
No hablan, ni responden elevados,
A todos con los ojos rodeavan,
Y mas callando el dano declaravan.
Araucan. Cant. vii.

Their entrance in these walls let fancy paint,
O'erwhelm'd with anguish, and with labour faint:
*These, gash'd with ghastly wounds, those, writh'd with pain,*
*And some their human semblance scarce retain*;
They seem'd unhappy spirits 'scap'd from hell,
Yet wanting voice their misery to tell.
Their pangs, to all, their rolling eyes express,
And silence most declares their deep distress.
Hayley.

Et caput, abscisum calido viventeque trunco,
Servat humi voltum vitalem, oculosque patenteis;
Donec reliquias animaï reddidit omneis.

Quin etiam, tibi si, linguâ vibrante, minanti
Serpentis caudâ, et procero corpore, utrumque
Sit lubitum in multas parteis discidere ferro;
Omnia jam seorsum cernes, amcisa recenti
Volnere, tortari, et terram conspargere tabo;
Ipsam seque retro partem petere ore priorem,
Volneris ardenti, ut morsu premat, icta dolore.
Omnibus esse igitur totas dicemus in illis
Particulis animas? at eâ ratione sequetur
Unam animantem animas habuisse in corpore multas.
Ergo divisa est ea, quæ fuit una simul cum

---

Ver. 662. ——*Thus, too, the head,*
*Whene'er dissever'd from the vital trunk,*
*Still keeps its look of life, with open eye*
*Still stares,*——] Mr. Wakefield, and not without reason, thinks he again beholds Virgil turning his eye towards this passage of Lucretius, in the following verses:

Tum *caput* orantis nequicquam, et multa parantis
Dicere, deturbat terræ: Æn. x. 554.

The trunkless head he hurl'd along the shore,
*Beseeching still,* and still *prepar'd t' implore.*

Whether Virgil, however, copied from Lucretius, or not, there can be no doubt that Camoens did so in the following passage:

Cabeças pello campo vam saltando
Braços, pernas, sem dono, e sem sentido,
E doutros as entranhas palpitando,
Palida a cor, o gesto amorticido.
Lusiad, Cant. iii.

*Arms sever'd from the trunks* still grasp the steel,
*Heads gasping roll,* the fighting squadrons reel;
Fainty and weak with languid arms they close,
And staggering grapple with the staggering foes.
Mickle.

Yet the idea of the severed parts of the body, retaining for some time sensation and muscular action, is, perhaps, no where more boldly exhibited than in the following stanza of Dr. Grainger's ballad of Bryan and Pyrreene. Returning from England to his native isle, and perceiving the fond fair one on the shore which the ship was slowly approaching, the impetuous lover leaps into the sea to accelerate his embraces:

Its trembling toes still moves. Thus, too, the head,
Whene'er dissever'd from the vital trunk,
Still keeps its look of life, with open eye
Still stares, till all the gradual soul expire.
So should thy blade some serpent's length of tail
Divide, quick-brandishing its furious tongue,
The sever'd parts writhe, agoniz'd, and broad
Scatter the purple fluid; while himself
Looks round revengeful, and, from pain severe,
Gnashes the segments of his mangled frame.

Shall we then say that each divided part
A perfect soul contains? then with such souls
The total form, ere injur'd, must have throng'd.
Hence severs, then, the soul, though close combin'd,

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When ah! a shark bit through his waist,
His heart's blood dy'd the shore.
He shriek'd!—*his half sprang from the main,*
Streaming with purple gore.

Ver. 666. *So should thy blade some serpent's length of tail*
*Divide, quick-brandishing its furious tongue,*
*The sever'd parts writhe, agoniz'd,*—] Our poet's description of the wounded snake, as of every other natural fact, is accurate and unimpeachable, for he at all times draws from Nature herself. The pertinacious adherence of life to many animals, is truly wonderful. I have already observed, that in worms, polypi, and several other reptiles of the same simplicity of frame, a division of the body, instead of destroying life, augments it, as every section becomes a distinct and perfect animal. Lobsters, crabs, spiders, and various others, again, although not capable of propagating life by sections, have an astonishing power of reproducing their mangled or amputated members. I have noticed, in a former place, that the land-tortoise will live six months after being deprived of its brain; and Redi informs us, that in several instances he has known it survive for three or four and twenty days after the separation of its head from its body. The pertinacity to life in the snake is not equal to this, but it approximates it by the length of time every segment will retain, not merely irritability, but animation. There is a kind of fury and vivacity which naturalists have noticed in every fragment of this reptile, that is scarcely paralleled by any other animal. Its heart will continue to beat for thirty hours after its death.

Corpore: quapropter mortale utrumque putandum est;
In multas quoniam parteis disciditur æque.

Præterea, si inmortalis natura animaï
Constat, et in corpus nascentibus insinuatur;
Quur super ante actam ætatem meminisse nequimus,
Nec vestigia gestarum rerum ulla tenemus?
Nam, si tanto opere est animi mutata potestas,
Omnium ut actarum exciderit retinentia rerum;
Non, ut opinor, id ab leto jam longiter errat.
Quapropter fateare necesse est, quæ fuit ante,
Interiisse; et, quæ nunc est, nunc esse creatam.

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Ver. 679. *Grant, too, the soul immortal, and infus'd,*
*At earliest birth, within us,—whence, resolve,*
*This full oblivion of all past events,*—] Our poet now proceeds, with much dexterity, to attack the opinions of all those philosophers, who contended either for a state of pre-existence, or a metempsychosis; doctrines which were peculiarly espoused by Pythagoras and Plato, who conceived that human souls, which consisted of a divine idea, united to a portion of the soul of the world, were created long anterior to the generation of the corporeal frame, and, residing in some other sphere than the earth, stood prepared to enter, at a moment's warning, into the microscopic body of the human embryo, at the first instant of conception. The difficulty of admitting the immediate presence of the Creator, in every act of copulation, however unhallowed and impure, for the purpose of providing an immaterial spirit for the occasion, has driven many immaterialists of modern times into a similar belief. But if the soul, the thinking principle, did pre-exist, how then, as Lucretius justly inquires, can it have lost its total knowledge of all prior transactions? and how again, if it have done so, can it be otherwise than a new, and altogether different being in the body, from what it was in its state of anterior existence? since consciousness is the sole foundation of all personal identity. From the perplexity introduced by these queries among ancient philosophers, there was but one mode of clear escape; and that was by cutting the Gordian knot that entangled them, and boldly contending, that all consciousness of such pre-existence was not lost; and that many of the transactions which had occurred in it, may be recalled to recollection by any man who will enter deeply into the study of the whole of his anterior being. This was denominated by Plato the doctrine of *reminiscence*, and was one of the most important tenets of the Academic philosophy. Empedocles and Pythagoras advanced still farther; and hardily declared, not only that they had existed antecedently, and had a general idea of such existence, and the facts with which it was accompanied, but that they recollected, most perfectly, the very names of the persons whose bodies they had at distinct periods inhabited. The former, indeed, for every purpose of general information, had been particularly fortunate;

Anterior, with the body; and hence, too,
Both must alike be mortal, since alike
To parts divisible with equal ease.
Grant, too, the soul immortal, and infus'd,
At earliest birth, within us—whence, resolve,
This full oblivion of all past events,
All former life?—for if the soul so change,
That nought remains of mem'ry in its make,
A change so total differs scarce from death.
Thus, what before existed, must have ceas'd,
And on its ruins sprung what now exists.

for he had been in both sexes of the human race, as well as in the bodies of birds and fishes. While the latter maintained, that he had been present at, and had partaken in the toils of the Trojan war, occupying at that period the body of Euphorbus, who was slain by Menelaus; that he was afterwards infused into the body of another hero, of the name of Æthalides: that he then possessed the corporeal tabernacle of a fisherman; that he afterwards resided, for more than two centuries, in the lower regions without any body at all; and that, at the expiration of this period, he was transmitted to the body of Pythagoras himself. Ridiculous as such a belief may appear at the present day, the metempsychosis was a doctrine accredited very generally in earlier periods: it was a tenet in the creed of the aborigines of our own country, and still continues to form a part of the belief of the worshippers, both of Brahma and Budha; and, of course, to form an article of the established religions of Hindu, Thibet, Ava, and Ceylon.

In the second volume of Dalrymple's Oriental Repertory, is a most curious and entertaining paper on "Transmigration and Final Beatitude," as taught by the Bramins. This paper composes a part of the Institutes of Menu, which were translated from the Sanskrit by Sir William Jones, and printed at Bengal, at the East-India Company's expence. It is a compendium of the different states and bodies mankind are to occupy hereafter, agreeably to a regulation dependent upon the moral conduct they exhibit in the present life. "For sinful acts," says Bhrigu, whose heart was the pure essence of virtue, "for sinful acts, that are mostly corporeal, a man shall assume, after death, a vegetable or mineral form: for such acts, mostly verbal, the form of a bird or a beast; and for sinful acts, mostly mental, the lowest of human conditions," &c.

Ver. 684. *A change so total differs scarce from death.*
*Thus, what before existed, must have ceas'd,*
*And on its ruins sprung what now exists.*—]
A similar position is advanced in ver. 534, of the present book; to the notes on which I refer the reader.

Præterea, si, jam perfecto corpore, nobis
Inferri solita est animi vivata potestas,
Tum, quom gignimur, et vitæ quom limen inimus;
Haud ita conveniebat, utei cum corpore, et unâ
Cum membris, videatur in ipso sanguine cresse:
Sed, velut in caveâ, per se sibi vivere solam
Convenit, ut sensu corpus tamen adfluat omne.
Quâ re, etiam atque etiam neque originis esse putandum est
Experteis animas, nec leti lege solutas:
Nam neque tanto opere adnecti potuisse putandum est
Corporibus nostris, extrinsecus insinuatas;
(Quod fieri totum contra manifesta docet res:
Namque ita connexa est per venas, viscera, nervos,
Ossaque, utei dentes quoque sensu participentur;
Morbus ut indicat, et gelidaï stringor aquaï,
Et lapis obpressus subitis e frugibus asper)
Nec, tam contextæ quom sint, exire videntur
Incolomes posse, et salvas exsolvere sese
Omnibus e nervis, atque ossibus, articulisque.

Quod, si forte putas, extrinsecus insinuatam,

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Ver. 692. *Grow with each growing member :——]* The original is highly forcible and expressive :

——utei cum corpore, et unâ
Cum membris, videatur in ipso sanguine cresse.

And it is not improbable, that Pope hence derived the following verses :

If the light soul, moreo'er, then only join
The full-form'd body, when that body first
Springs into birth, and treads the porch of life,
Ne'er can it then, as though diffus'd at large,
E'en with the vital blood, through all the frame,
Grow with each growing member: but confin'd,
As in a den, in solitude must dwell,
From the first hour exciting equal sense.
Hence doubly flows it, souls can ne'er exist
Of birth devoid, nor free from final fate.
Nor could they, as each daily fact confirms,
If from without infus'd, the total frame
Fit with such nice precision: for so close
Blend they with every organ, bone, and nerve,
That e'en th' enamel'd tooth sensation shares;
As oft its ache evinces, or th' approach
Of ice abrupt; or when, beneath its gripe,
Grates some harsh pebble mid the subject food.
Nor thus connected could they e'er retreat
Safe, and uninjur'd through the sinuous paths
Of organs, membranes, vessels, bones, and nerves.
But, from without, th' insinuating soul,

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The young disease, that must subdue at length,
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength;
So cast, and mingled with his very frame
The mind's disease, its ruling passion came.
Essay on Man, Ep. ii.

Permanere animam nobis per membra solere:
Tanto quoique magis, cum corpore fusa, peribit.
Quod permanat enim, dissolvitur: interit ergo.
Dispartita ergo per caulas corporis omneis,
(Ut cibus, in membra atque artus quom ducitur omneis,
Disperit, atque aliam naturam subficit ex se)
Sic anima atque animus, quam vis integra recens in
Corpus eunt, tamen in manando dissoluuntur,
Dum, quasi per caulas, omneis diduntur in artus
Particulæ, quibus hæc animi natura creatur:
Quæ nunc in nostro dominatur corpore, nata
Ex illâ, quæ tunc peritât, partita per artus.

Quapropter, neque natali privata videtur
Esse die natura animæ, nec funeris expers.
Semina præterea linquuntur, necne, animaï
Corpore in exanimo? Quod, si linquuntur, et insunt,

---

Ver. 711. *For what thus flows diffusive, must dissolve,*
*And perish, doubtless, forc'd through every pore.*] Such, as I have already observed, was the actual opinion of our poet respecting the soul, or sensorial power which he conceived to be generally diffused over the whole system, enlivening every individual point with the animating aura derived from the central fountain of the bosom. This, he supposed, to be exhausted by fatigue, whether external or internal, to be renewed by the inspiration of the vital gasses of atmospheric air, and to be accumulated by relaxation, or rest. Those who are acquainted with the physiology of Dr. Darwin, will trace a strong resemblance between this wasting and accumulating sensorial power of Epicurus, and his own spirit of animation; of both, it may be equally said:

——in nostris membris et corpore toto
Mixta latens *animi vis* est, *animæque potestas*.
Lib. iii. 277.

Virgil appears to have imitated the passage now under consideration, in the following:

If still thou deem through all this frame diffus'd,
Then, since diffus'd, much surer must it fail;
For what thus flows diffusive, must dissolve,
And perish, doubtless, forc'd through every pore.
As vanish foods, through every mazy gland,
Through every limb when urg'd, to different forms
Converting gradual, so the mind, the soul
Howe'er entire, when first the flesh it meets
Dissolves by junction; for through every sluice,
Through every organ intricate and fine,
Must percolate its atoms, sever'd hence,
And decompos'd,—and hence the base alone
Of that which after sways th' external frame.
Thus must the soul a natal day possess,
And final grave, an origin and end.
Fly, too, at death, the soul's pure seeds entire,
Or with the body are there still that rest?

——abditaque intus
*Spiramenta animæ* lethali vulnere rupit.
Æn. ix. 579.

The forceful spear with mortal wound sinks deep,
And drives the soul through all its latent pores.

Ver. 724. *Fly, too, at death, the soul's pure seeds entire,*
*Or with the body are there still that rest?*] Doctor Priestley, and some other materialists, seem to have conceived, in order to account the better for personal identity and responsibility, in a future state, that the few elementary atoms that compose the embryon and incipient frame of every man, adhere to him through life, continue undissipated in his grave, and will again constitute an essential part of him at the resurrection. This idea, however, is so repugnant to all the known and admitted laws of animal being, that it cannot be supported for a moment. It is allowed by all physiologists, that every atom of the human body is perpetually, though imperceptibly, wearing away, and its place supplied by fresh atoms introduced in the form of food; and that hence, in process of time, every man is, as to his physical frame, a being altogether different from what he was formerly, having no one corpuscle

Haud erit, ut merito inmortalis possit haberi :
Partibus amissis quoniam libata recessit.
Sin ita, sinceris membris ablata, profugit,
Et nullas parteis in corpore liquerit ex se ;
Unde cadavera rancenti jam viscere vermeis
Exspirant ? atque unde animantum copia tanta,
Exos et exsanguis, tumidos perfluctuat artus ?
Quod, si forte animas extrinsecus insinuari
Vermibus, et privo si corpore posse venire,
Credis ; nec reputas, quur milia multa animarum
Conveniant, unde una recesserit : hoc tamen est, ut

of his past self remaining in his present. To conceive then that, amidst this general waste and repair, there are some few atoms so specially endowed as to resist every change whatsoever, and competent to retain their posts unshaken and unaffected by all that occurs on every side; and more especially, to conceive that, after death, they shall remain connected, while all is dispersed around them, is to indulge a latitude of fancy, highly incongruous with the rigid rules of philosophizing, and altogether unwarranted by facts, or analogy. Nor does the conception remove any difficulty whatever. For, even admitting that there are such atoms provided by nature, atoms that change not during life, and that sleep unaltered in the grave, the personal identity that hence ensues can only be partial; and the great mass of extrinsic atoms which must unite to complete the resurging body, can still have no physical connexion with the moral conduct of which these original atoms partook in their anterior state of existence, and, consequently, can possess no physical accountability whatsoever; nor be entitled to the common punishment or reward which the re-organized substance is about to receive. The same difficulty, however, attaches to immaterialists as well, and in nearly an equal degree. For, admitting the essence of the soul, or thinking principle, to be precisely the same at the day of resurrection as it existed on earth, and that personal identity and accountability are hence preserved entire; yet, upon its junction with a corporeal body, if the entire particles of this body be not precisely the same as those which constituted the material machine at the hour of death,—it can still be but entitled in part, and not universally, to the retribution that awaits it; for, whatever portions of it are new, and for the first time admitted into the general organization, must be totally devoid of all prior merit or demerit.

Personal identity and responsibility must, therefore, result from another cause; from the simple possession of consciousness, a property which may be communicated by the Deity to any system of matter he pleases. And as it would never be admitted as a plea in diminution of guilt at the bar of human justice, that the crime, of which the prisoner stands charged, was committed ten or fifteen years ago; and that hence, in consequence of the physical changes which have taken place in his system, he is not the identical culprit that committed the crime alleged and proved against him; so, neither

If aught remain, then idly must thou deem
The soul immortal, since diminish'd thus,
And shorn of substance; but if all escape,
If not an atom loiter—whence, I ask,
Rears the putrescent carcase, in its womb,
The race of worms? or sport o'er every limb
The boneless, bloodless crowds of things unnam'd?
If from without thou deem their souls they draw,
To each a soul entire, unheeding here
What throngs must flock where dwelt but one before,

can a plea of this kind be expected to be admitted in exculpation of prior guilt before the tremendous bar of the Almighty, whatever be the theory of materialism or immaterialism adopted upon this subject.

Ver. 732. *The boneless, bloodless crowds of things unnam'd?*] Thus Bope:

Those half-learn'd witlings, numerous in our isle,
As half-form'd insects on the banks of Nile;
*Unfinish'd things one knows not what to call,*
Their generation's so equivocal.

Essay on Criticism.

So, Virgil, in describing the production of swarms of bees from the putrid carcase of a bullock slaughtered and properly prepared for the purpose:

Sic positum in clauso linquunt; et ramea costis
Subjiciunt fragmenta, thymum, casiasque recentes.
Hoc geritur, zephyris primum impellentibus undas,
Ante novis rubeant quam prata coloribus, ante
Garrula quam tignis nidum suspendat hirundo.
Interea teneris tepefactus in ossibus humor
Æstuat: et visenda modis animalia miris,
Trunca pedum primo, mox et stridentia pennis
Miscentur, tenuemque magis, magis æra carpunt.

Georg. iv. 302.

There leave immur'd, and o'er the carcase spread
Boughs and fresh sweets that thyme and cassia shed.
Thus, all prepar'd, when first young zephyr laves
His sportive pinions in the vernal waves,
Ere flowrets blush on earth's enamell'd breast,
Or swallows twitter in their rafter'd nest.
Meanwhile the moisture, with fermenting strife,
Boils in the tender bones, and teems with life;
First on the sight, all-wondrous to behold,
Forms without feet, a shapeless growth unfold;
Anon the mingled swarms for flight prepare,
Buzz on the wing, and feel the buoyant air.

Sotheby.

Upon the subject of equivocal generation and spontaneous vitality, its general belief in former periods, and the observations of modern natural historians, which have tended to revive the doctrine, and to give it additional plausibility, see note on Book II. 878. The argument of our poet, however, will here also, as well as on a former occasion, hold equally good, whether the system espoused be that of spontaneous vitality, or sexual generation alone.

Quærundum videatur, et in discrimen agundum;
Utrum tandem animæ venentur semina quæque
Vermiculorum, ipsæque sibi fabricentur, ubei sunt:
An quasi corporibus perfectis insinuentur.
At neque, quur faciant ipsæ, quâ reve laborent,
Dicere subpeditat; neque enim, sine corpore quom sunt,
Solicitæ volitant morbis, alguque, fameque:
Corpus enim magis hiis vitiis, et fine, laborat;
Et mala cuncta animus contagi fungitur ejus.
Sed tamen hiis esto quam vis facere utile corpus,
Quod subeant; at, quâ possint, via nulla videtur:
Haud igitur faciunt animæ sibi corpora, et artus.
Nec tamen est, quî cum perfectis insinuentur
Corporibus: neque enim poterunt subtiliter esse
Connexæ; neque consensu contagia fient.

Denique, quur acris violentia triste leonum
Seminium sequitur, volpeis dolus; et fuga cervis
A patribus datur, et patrius pavor incitat artus?
Et jam cætera de genere hoc, quur omnia membris
Ex ineunte ævo generascunt, ingenioque;
Si non, certa suo quia semine, seminioque,
Vis animi pariter crescit cum corpore quoque?
Quod, si inmortalis foret, et mutare soleret

Pause yet one moment ere thou thus resolve:
Such souls must, then, the vermin seeds themselves
Have wise-selected, and their fabrics rear'd,
Or into bodies enter'd ready form'd.
But nor can reason, if themselves have rais'd
The wretched buildings, for the toil account,
Nor tell why thus for hunger, and disease,
And shivering cold they thirst, or aught besides
Of ill the body to the soul supplies.
Yet grant them anxious for such vile abodes,
Still must the structure far exceed their powers,
Hence rear'd not by themselves. Nor from without
Could they insinuate into bodies form'd;
Since nor adapted to their sinuous pores,
Nor fram'd for intercourse, and mutual act.
Whence springs the fury that pervades throughout
The ruthless breed of lions? whence the craft
The fox evinces, or the stag's wild fear,
From sire to son through every race propell'd?
Whence these and equal passions trac'd at large,
From life's first dawn, generic, through each class?
Whence but that some fixt power of mind descends,
E'en with the lineal seed, through all begot,
Evolving gradual with the gradual growth?
For were the soul immortal, changing oft

Corpora, permixtis animantes moribus essent:
Ecfugeret canis Hyrcano de semine sæpe
Cornigeri incursum cervi; tremeretque, per auras
Aëris, adcipiter, fugiens, veniente columbâ:
Desiperent homines, saperent fera secla ferarum.
Illud enim falsâ fertur ratione, quod aiunt
Inmortalem animam mutato corpore flecti;
Quod mutatur enim, dissolvitur: interit ergo:
Trajiciuntur enim partes, atque ordine migrant;
Quâ re dissolvi quoque debent posse per artus,
Denique ut intereant, unâ cum corpore, cunctæ.
Sin animas hominum dicent in corpora semper
Ire humana, tamen quæram, quur e sapienti
Stulta queat fieri, nec prudens sit puer ullus;
Nec tam doctus equæ pullus, quam fortis equi vis?
Si non, certa suo quia semine, seminioque,
Vis animi pariter crescit cum corpore quoque.
Scilicet in tenero tenerascere corpore mentem

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Ver. 751. *Whence springs the fury that pervades throughout*
*The ruthless breed of lions?*——] This, also, is an argument, and by no means an unsuccessful one, advanced against the disciples of Pythagoras, Empedocles, and Plato. See, on this subject, the note on verse 681 of the present book.

Ver. 762. ——*the* Hyrcanian *dog*] Hyrcania is a country in Asia on the borders of the Caspian sea. It is covered, in many places, with immense and untravelled woods, which are filled with tigers, and other beasts of prey. Gratius (Cyneg. 161) reports, that the domestic bitch of the country often copulates with the

To diff'rent bodies, diff'rent tempers, then,
Must mark each order: the HYRCANIAN dog
Oft, then, must dread the high-horn'd stag's approach;
Hawks fly from doves, e'en man himself turn brute,
And the brute tribes, prepost'rous, rule the world.
Nor heed the sophistry which here contends
That souls oft change the body's change to meet:
For that which changes must dissolve, and die,
Sever'd its parts, its order all destroy'd.
Hence souls must, too, dissolve through ev'ry limb,
And with the body share one common fate.
But shouldst thou urge that human souls their flight
To human forms restrain—then, since once wise,
To folly why relapse? why spring not boys
Replete with wisdom? nor displays the colt
The skilful paces of the steed mature?
Why but that some fixt power of mind descends
E'en with the lineal seed through all begot,
Evolving gradual with the gradual growth?
Nor think the soul, too, weakens in a weak,

male tiger, and that the breed is peculiarly ferocious. Pliny and Cicero both make mention of this Hyrcanian dog, and speak of it as a most noble animal. Nat. Hist. viii. 61. Tusc. Quæst. i. 46.

To the tiger of the same country, Shakspeare also refers in that well-known address of Macbeth to the ghost of Banquo:

Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or HYRCANIAN tyger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble.

Confugient: quod si jam fit, fateare necesse est
Mortalem esse animam; quoniam, mutata per artus
Tanto opere, amittit vitam, sensumque priorem.
Quove modo poterit, pariter cum corpore quoque
Confirmata, cupitum ætatis tangere florem
Vis animi, nisi erit consors in origine primâ?
Quidve foras sibi volt membris exire senectis?
An metuit conclusa manere in corpore putri?
An, domus ætatis spatio ne fessa vetusto
Obruat? at non sunt jam inmortali ulla pericla.
Denique, connubia ad Veneris, partusque ferarum,
Esse animas præsto, deridiculum esse videtur;
Exspectare inmortaleis mortalia membra
Innumero numero, certareque præproperanter
Inter se, quæ prima, potissimaque, insinuetur:
Si non forte ita sunt animarum fœdera pacta,
Ut, quæ prima volans advenerit, insinuetur
Prima, neque inter se contendant viribus hilum.
Denique, in æthere non arbor, non æquore in alto
Nubes esse queunt, nec pisces vivere in arvis,

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Ver. 792. *What, too, so idle, as that souls should throng*
*Round each vile intercourse, or beast that bears:*] I have already glanced at this argument in the note on ver. 681, of the present book; and observed that the soul, if immaterial, must either pre-exist in some other state than the present world, in some magazine prepared for the purpose, ready to take its flight, and unite itself with the incipient body at a moment's warning, which was the opinion of Pythagoras and Plato; or, that the Creator must be essentially present and occupied during every intercourse

And puny system, since most surely then
Doom'd to destruction; by the change sustain'd
Shorn of its vigour, and interior sense.
Why, if endear'd not by one common birth,
Thus should it pant in equal hour to reach
Perfection with the body? or, revers'd,
Why long for freedom when the frame decays?
Fears, then, the soul confinement after death
Mid the foul members? or the dang'rous fall
Of its own tott'ring mansion? But, reflect,
What lives immortal, danger ne'er can know.
What, too, so idle, as that souls should throng
Round each vile intercourse, or beast that bears:
Immortal souls! contesting who shall first
Enter the feeble fetus; if, perchance,
This not decides them, and all strife precludes,
That who first gains it, claims a prior right.

Trees not in ether, not in ocean clouds,
Nor in the fields can fishes e'er exist;

---

of the sexes, of whatever kind it may be, in forming a soul for the occasion. The commentator upon Creech's translation, finding himself driven to the dilemma of assenting to the one or the other of these hypotheses, has chosen the latter. Upon a proposal of the same argument by Dr. Priestley to Dr. Price, in their printed discussion of this subject, Price preferred to evade the question altogether. In the case of the souls of brutes, however, the commentator upon Creech contends for their being immaterial, but not immortal. See note in Creech's translation, Book III. ver. 797.

Nec cruor in lignis, neque saxis sucus, inesse:
Certum ac dispositum est, ubi quidquid crescat, et insit:
Sic animi natura nequit sine corpore oriri
Sola, neque a nervis et sanguine longius esse.
Quod si posset enim, multo prius ipsa animi vis
In capite, aut humeris, aut imis calcibus, esse
Posset, et innasci quâ vis in parte soleret;
Quamde in eodem homine atque in eodem vase manere.
Quod quoniam nostro quoque constat corpore certum;
Dispositumque videtur, ubi esse, et crescere, possit
Seorsum anima, atque animus; tanto magis inficiandum
Totum posse extra corpus durare, genique.
Quâ re corpus ubi interiit, periisse, necesse est,
Confiteare animam, distractam in corpore toto.

Quippe et enim mortalem æterno jungere, et unâ
Consentire putare, et fungi mutua, posse,
Desipere est: quid enim divorsius esse putandum est,
Aut magis inter se disjunctum, discrepitansque,
Quam, mortale quod est, inmortali atque perenni
Junctum, in concilio sævas tolerare procellas?

Præterea, quæquomque manent æterna, necesse est,
Aut, quia sunt solido cum corpore, respuere ictus,
Nec penetrare pati sibi quidquam quod queat artas
Dissociare intus parteis; ut materiaï

Nor blood in planks, nor vital juice in stones:
But all springs definite in scenes defin'd.
So in the bosom lives, and there alone,
Mixt with its blood, and nerves, the secret mind:
There only lives,—for could it roam at all,
Then rather should we through the body's self,
The heel, or shoulder, or where else it chose,
Oft trace it wand'ring, than forlorn abroad.
Since e'en in body, then, the soul and mind
Are fixt thus definite—we amply prove
That out of body these can ne'er exist:
That when the flesh its certain doom sustains,
The soul must, too, through ev'ry limb dissolve.

To deem, moreo'er, that mortal can combine
With aught immortal,—can together live
Concordant, and in mutual duties blend,
Is full delirium. Can there be conceiv'd
Aught more unmeet, incongruous, or absurd,
Than with a mortal that a frame should mix
Immortal, doom'd to all its weight of woe?
What lives immortal, too, must so exist,
Or from its own solidity, empower'd
Each blow to conquer, undivided still,
As primal atoms, long anterior sung:

Corpora sunt, quorum naturam obtendimus ante;
Aut ideo durare ætatem posse per omnem,
Plagarum quia sunt expertia, sic ut inane est;
Quod manet intactum, neque ab ictu fungitur hilum:
Aut etiam quia nulla loci sit copia circum,
Quo quasi res possint discedere, dissoluique;
Sic uti summarum summa est æterna, neque extra
Quis locus est, quo diffugiant; neque corpora sunt, quæ
Possint incidere, et validâ dissolvere plagâ:
At neque, utei docui, solido cum corpore mentis
Natura est, quoniam admixtum est in rebus inane:
Nec tamen est ut inane; neque autem corpora desunt,
Ex infinito quæ possint forte coorta
Proruere hanc mentis violento turbine molem,
Aut aliam quam vis cladem inportare pericli:
Nec porro natura loci, spatiumque profundi,
Deficit, exspargi quo possit vis animaï,
Aut aliâ quâ vis possit vi pulsa perire:
Haud igitur leti præclusa est janua menti.
Quod, si forte ideo magis inmortalis habenda est,
Quod vitalibus ab rebus, munita, tenetur;

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Ver. 802. *So in the bosom lives, and there alone,*] *Mixt with its blood, and nerves, the secret mind:*] For the motives which induced Epicurus and Lucretius to place the existence of the mind in the bosom, see note on verse 100 of this book.

Ver. 840. ——*gates of death.*] Our poet is much attached to this figure, which is strictly of Hebrew origin, and to which the Hebrew bards are as much attached as himself. I have given one instance of this parallelism from Job, in closing the notes

Or since, like vacuum, of all friction void,
Free from all touch, by impulse unimpair'd;
Or from the want of circling space, in which
The sev'ring atoms may dissolve and fall;
Such want the boundless whole of nature proves,
And hence eternal—for no place beyond
Spreads, where its seeds could waste; nor, from without,
Can foreign force e'er enter to destroy.
But nor, as urg'd above, exists the mind
All solid, since in all things void combines,
Nor yet all vacuum; nor, from the profound,
Are wanting powers adverse that, into act
Once rous'd tempestuous, the whole mind derange,
Or sever total;—nor deficient space
Spread widely round, through which, in countless modes,
The mental frame may crumble, and dissolve;
Hence not precluded from the gates of death.

But shouldst thou still the soul immortal deem,
Since guarded deep from many a mortal wound,

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on book the first: another may be found in Ps. ix. 3.

מדומי משערי מות

And hath raised me from *the gates of death.*

So again, synonymously, Ps. lxxviii. 23:

ודלתי שמים פתח

And *the doors of the heavens* he opened.

Ver. 841. *But shouldst thou still the soul immortal deem,*
*Since guarded deep from many a mortal wound,*]
This is the last argument advanced by our poet, in fa-

Aut quia non veniunt omnino aliena salutis;
Aut quia, quæ veniunt, aliquâ ratione recedunt
Pulsa prius, quam, quid noceant, sentire queamus;
[Scilicet a verâ longe ratione remotum est.]
Præter enim, quam quod morbis tum corporis ægrit,
Advenit id, quod eam de rebus sæpe futuris
Maceret, inque metu male habet, curisque fatigat;
Præteritisque male admissis peccata remordent,
Adde furorem animi proprium, atque oblivia rerum;
Adde quod in nigras lethargi mergitur undas.

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vour of the materiality, and consequent mortality of the soul: its affection by external circumstances, and its possession of even a larger share of evils than those to which the body itself is exposed.

Ver. 854. *Cocytus dull pool of lethargy profound.*] From this verse, in all probability, Martial:

Porra per hunc fugies ingratæ flumina Lethes.
X. ii. 7.

Hence the dull pool of Lethe shalt thou fly.

With this argument, our poet, as just observed, concludes his observations in favour of the materiality of the soul, or sentient principle; and it may now, perhaps, be expected that, in the present commentary, I should briefly enumerate the chief arguments which have been urged on the opposite side of the question, by different philosophers of different ages. This, however, is a task altogether inadmissible: yet, as the counter-positions advanced by the Cardinal Polignac are more immediately directed against the poem before us, and to a certainty, constitute the most concentrated and the most popular system of opposition of any which has hitherto been urged; and as nothing of material moment has been advanced since its publication, I cannot avoid offering a brief statement of their contents. They are to be found in the fifth and sixth books of the Anti-Lucretius.

In the note on ver. 101 of the book before us, I have given the opinion of our own countryman, Mr. Locke, respecting the capability of matter to exhibit the phænomenon of intelligence, together with the severe attack of the Cardinal upon him for such a creed. It is in conjoint repugnance to this celebrated philosopher, as well as to our own poet, that the Cardinal commences his attack, by contending that the human soul cannot be material from the very nature of matter itself; since there is nothing in any of the modifications of matter, as the position, magnitude, figure or motion of its particles, whence intelligence can result; modifications which are mere alternating forms of material things, and can press to nothing beyond. He next attempts to demonstrate, that spirit has nothing in common with matter; that it must have existed antecedently to it, and have first of all stimulated it into motion. In reply to the objection, that the soul is, and must be acted upon by matter, and

Safe from full many an insult that assails
The health exterior, and since many a blow,
Aim'd at its powers, discomfited recoils
Ere scarce ourselves the dread approach perceive,
Still far thou wand'rest; for the common woes
Excluding that from body draw their birth,
Yet pines she anxious for to-morrow's fate,
Yet shakes with dread, with carking care consumes,
Or smarts from conscience of committed crimes.
Add, too, that madness is her own—that oft
All mem'ry fails, and o'er each torpid pow'r
Creeps the dull pool of lethargy profound.

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this from immediate contact, he admits that there is the closest conjunction between them, but continues to maintain, that their essences are not the same, which he endeavours by various analogies to illustrate, but more particularly by the union subsisting between the musician and his instrument. From the unity and simplicity of the intelligent principle, he deduces its immortality; and finally contends, that every other system is incompatible with the idea of moral liberty. These arguments, and their illustrations, form the basis of the fifth book of the Anti-Lucretius. But the author still perceived that much remained to be accomplished; for his opponent had observed, that sensation was not the property of man alone, but of every class of the brute creation as well: that these, therefore, were also possessed of souls, or a sentient principle; and that, as, with respect to such souls, there could be no doubt of their materiality, it should seem to follow, that the soul of man is also material, and, consequently, mortal. The whole of the sixth book is hence devoted to the investigation of this latter doctrine of the Epicurean system: and here it is that the Cardinal, although he spares no pains, and arms himself with all the panoply of the Cartesian school, appears least redoubtable and argumentative.

He first observes, ver. 344, that the vulgar belief of the existence of a soul in brutes, is extremely doubtful. "Perhaps," says he, "it is true: I will not deny it; for reason forbids me to deny whatever is not obviously false. Yet, perhaps, it is not so. I see certain actions performed, but I do not see the cause of those actions. To trace this cause, is the office of reason, and not of the sight; for the sight, in a thousand instances, deceives us: and reason ought, hence, to be the judge, and not the slave of our senses. You conjecture," continues he, ver. 358, "that brutes possess the passions of desire and fear, because they evince the signs of those passions: but man, when actuated by desire or fear, not only exhibits their *external* signs, which are often fallacious, but you are conscious that these passions are actually existing *within* him."

In reply to this, however, it is obvious that no man can be logically conscious of any thing that occurs external to himself. It is from external signs

Nihil igitur mors est, ad nos neque pertinet hilum,
Quandoquidem natura animi mortalis habetur.

alone that he supposes the multitude by whom he is surrounded to be his fellows, and possessed of sensations and passions like his own: and whenever he beholds such signs of passion or sensation exhibited by a brute, he has the same reason for supposing him the subject of such emotions, as for supposing the same of any of his own species. And if a strict and perfect consciousness of the *internal* emotions of other men be necessary to constitute the belief, that they are possessed of an intelligent principle as well as ourselves; if a doubt be, in this manner, to be perpetually thrown upon the evidence of the external senses,—no man can be conscious of the existence of any intelligent being, excepting his own individual person; and the scepticism of Pyrrho, or the idealism of Berkley or Hume, is immediately introduced, which is the very reverse of what Polignac designed.

The Cardinal, secondly, proceeds to assert, that we have as much reason for absurdly admitting the existence of a percipient soul in vegetables and minerals, as in brutes, since many classes of both these kingdoms give evident external signs of internal passion or commotion; and particularly the mimosa (*herba manum fugiens, a sensu nomen adepta*) and the magnet. But this is evidently affirming too much for his own purpose. For we have no more reason to conclude, *à priori*, that matter in any state of combination could exhibit the properties of the magnet, the mimosa, or the brute creation, than that it could produce the phænomena of intelligence. And it is principally from careful and repeated observation of the former, that Lucretius, Locke, and every modern materialist, deduces his belief of the possibility of the latter. In reply to the question, therefore, which seems naturally to ensue, why may not the substance that is capable of producing fossil attraction, vegetable irritability, and brutal instinct and sensation, be competent to the production of human intelligence? The Cardinal,

Thirdly, advances a step farther, and hardily asserts, ver. 1085, that there is no such thing as attraction, irritability, instinct, or sensation, in any combination of matter whatsoever: and that brutes, plants, and fossils, are all equally automatons, beings alike devoid of voluntary action, and alone impelled by foreign stimulus. And that, as the arrow which flies from the bow does not quit it from a sense of hatred or fear, nor strike and wound the object, against which it is directed, from the possession of anger: so, without any passion of his own, the dog pursues the wolf, or engages in the act of concupiscence. As to the doctrine of physical attraction, Descartes imagined he avoided its necessity, by embracing that of an absolute plenum; upon which I have already observed, in various notes on book the first of this poem. As to sensation, he contended that it could only be the property of an intelligent being; while, with regard to instinct, the Cardinal, pursuing the dictates of his master, observes, ver. 1145, that the ocean, which renews its tide at definite and alternate periods, has just as much of it as any brute whatever. "What," inquires he, "is meant by this vulgar and empty term instinct? Is it mind, or is it not? If not, then is there nothing existing but a mere machine? If it be mind, is it a mind residing within the body of the brute, or exterior to it? If the latter, it is the universal Mind, or great First Cause of all things, acting by impulse, and the brute is a mere machine still: if the former, yet must this instinctive principle differ widely from the principle of human intelligence, since it endows its possessor with a fixed degree of instantaneous knowledge, neither capable of increase, nor acquired by a long course of habit and education. To support such a theory," he tells us, "is not to establish the creed of material intelligence, but to recal to our aid the metempsychosis of Pythagoras and the Gymnosophists, and to believe that every existent brute is inhabited by a genius or spirit, immortal in its nature, and which is perpetually transmigrating from body to body. A belief," continues the Cardinal, ver. 1214—1254, "which, however extraordinary and unauthorized, is certainly much more consistent and tolerable than the creed, which maintains the production of percep-

Hence, death is nought, and justly claims our scorn, 855
Since with the body thus the soul decays.

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tion and intelligence from any modification of pure unconscious matter. I am thus," concludes he, "doubly armed against the difficulty which is started by the materialist: for if I be not altogether satisfied with the doctrine, that brutes are mere machines, which I think highly plausible, to say the least of it, I may still shelter myself under the theory of transmigration, and maintain that they are not mere matter."

This double armour, however, with which the Cardinal thus encumbers himself, proves, obviously, that he places no great degree of confidence in either. As to the Cartesian doctrine, which levels every class and order of the brute creation to mere passive machines, intrinsically as inert as so many blocks of wood, or clods of earth, it is in itself so outrageous to the common appearances of nature, that few immaterialists are disposed to give it countenance at the present moment, whatever be the new difficulties into which they plunge, by disavowing it. And with respect to the doctrine of an instinctive principle, no reason can be adduced why matter may not be endowed with this, as well as with any other power which it daily evinces, regarded as a separate and specific faculty; no argument can demonstrate why the Creator might not, by a general law, determine that, in a certain state of modification, matter should be specially gifted with a determinate portion of absolute knowledge, pointing out to its possessor, almost, or altogether from its birth, what to avoid and what to pursue; in the same manner as he has ordained by another general law, and under another modification, that no material being should be able to acquire knowledge otherwise than by habit, education, and industry, while, at the same time, the knowledge thus obtained should be progressive and unlimited. But it is by no means absolutely certain, that all the various orders of animal life do not submit to as regular a system of education in the attainment of knowledge, as man himself. Lord Monboddo, Dr. Darwin, and many other physiologists, have advanced various plausible facts and experiments, in order to prove that every animal is as much indebted for the information of which he is possest, to habit, imitation, and industry, as any one of the human race. The knowledge of brutes does not, indeed, appear to be very progressive; but their powers of acquiring improvement are infinitely small in comparison with those of mankind: and even these latter, in a state of pure, uncivilized nature, exhibit few superior proofs of progression beyond the brute creation itself. The Kamschadale, the Eschimaux, and the Caffre, are at this moment exactly the same as they were on their first discovery; and the bullinch, who is deprived of the common materials with which she constructs her nest, would probably, with more ease, select a new assortment, than any one of these savages provide himself with a hovel, if deprived of the mud and weeds of which he ordinarily builds it.

As to the doctrine of transmigration, to which the Cardinal flies, as his second resort, its absurdity renders it as little a subject of belief in the present day, as that of the mere mechanism of brutes; nor would it, by any means, answer his purpose, if embraced. For what, it might be inquired, are to become of these genii or spirits that inhabit the bodies of brutes, and are immortal in their own nature, at the destruction of the world? Matter, again, being in every state of organization, according to his own system, equally passive and inert; and vegetables, and even minerals, being in every instance actuated in the faculties they evince, by the same stimulus as brutes, it follows that the same kind of genius or spirit that inhabits the body of a dog, must also reside in that of the mimosa, or the magnet; without the possession of which, neither of them could manifest their respective and peculiar properties. So that, upon this latter hypothesis, every brute, every vegetable, and every mineral, nay, every fragment of every mineral, and every particle of matter at large, must necessarily prove the mansion of an immortal and immaterial spirit; without the energy

Et, velut ante acto nihil tempore sensimus ægri,
Ad confligundum venientibus undique Pœnis;
Omnia quom, belli trepido concussa tumultu,
Horrida, contremuere sub altis ætheris auris;
In dubioque fuere, utrorum ad regna cadundum
Omnibus humanis esset, terrâque, marique:

and volition of whom neither gravitation, magnetism, irritability, muscular motion, sensation, could display itself, or even exist.

Ver. 855. *Hence, death is nought, and justly claims our scorn,*
*Since with the body thus the soul decays.*] The poet having established, as far as he was able, the mortality of the human soul, proceeds, by a variety of forcible and well-selected arguments, to destroy that unreasonable dread of death which, in his own age more especially, was perpetually hurrying mankind into a commission of the most flagrant crimes, of which he has already enumerated many in the opening of the present book. The dread he here refers to, still attaches to multitudes in our own age; and to multitudes, moreover, who, by the rectitude of their lives, and the superior knowledge imparted to them by the glorious dispensation of the gospel, should be released from its influence. Among Christians of this character, the terror which so perpetually haunts them, proceeds, as it did amongst the greater part of the philosophers of our poet's own æra, from an oscillation or equal balance of hope and fear: not, indeed, with respect to the existence of a future state, but as to their own condition when they have entered upon it. Upon both these subjects, the heathen world, from the moment they admitted the possibility of a posterior being, could not be otherwise than a prey to anxiety. The admission of the possibility did not prove the fact: they were doubtful as to the existence of such a state; and they were equally doubtful as to their own felicity or misery, whenever the subjects of it: upon neither point, after all their researches, were they capable of obtaining any satisfactory or certain information. They believed, and they disbelieved; they hoped, and they feared; and the arguments on each side appeared equally indecisive. Grotius has a passage to the same effect: Apud Græcos, observes he, ad quos eruditio usque a Chaldæis et Ægyptiis perlata est, qui de vita post hujus conspicuæ vitæ interitum spem habebant aliquam, valde de ea re hæsitanter loquebantur, &c. "The Greek philosophers, who derived their learning from the Chaldeans and Egyptians, though they had some idea of a future life, spoke with extreme hesitation concerning it; as is evident from the dialogues of Socrates, the writings of Cicero, Seneca, and others: and though they searched diligently for arguments in proof of what they desired, they could obtain nothing of certainty." De Verit. Relig. Christ. lib. ii.

It was on this account that Socrates, in his defence before the Athenians, observed: "*No man knows what death is*, or whether it may not be the greatest felicity which can arrive to us; yet *every one fears, and flies from it*, as though it were sure to prove his greatest misfortune." Plut. in Phæd. But this, as I have formerly noticed, was not all: for anxious, even to the abjuration of every temporal pleasure, to obtain the favour of the mysterious divinity in a future state, if such were to be their portion, and unacquainted with the precise means of acquiring it, the trembling philosopher united in the popular superstitions of the day; paid the homage of adoration to the unworthy deities of the multi-

And as we now, through long anterior time,
Look back indifferent on the Punic hosts
That threaten'd Rome, when, with the din of war,
All shook tremendous heaven's high cope beneath,
And doubtful hung the scale which pow'r should rule
Earth, main, and mortals, with unrivall'd sway;

tude, and were punctilious in attending at their temples. The source of these superstitious practices could not escape the eye of the founder of the Epicurean system. He had persuaded himself, that death is the final close of the soul as well as of the body; that, hereafter, there is nothing to be either hoped for or apprehended: and that the present life is a blessing which, terminate whenever it may, is entitled to an habitual thanksgiving and gratitude. Hence, all that remained to be done, the whole duty of man, consisted in using life so as not to abuse it; in devoting it to the attainment of the greatest portion of real and rational enjoyment; and in contemplating death as the quiet and peaceful mansion of everlasting repose. Exchange the word *everlasting* for *temporary*, and the Christian may go hand in hand with him. And hence the reflections and observations which follow, though founded upon an erroneous creed, so far as relates to the immortality of the soul, and a future existence, are, in other respects, of universal application, and may be made subservient to universal benefit, as well as universal entertainment."

The passage of Lucretius, which has drawn forth these observations, is deduced from a similar one in Epicurus. Laertius has inserted it in his tenth book: Συνεθιζε δε σεαυτον εν το νομιζειν μηδεν προς ημας ειναι τον θανατον, επει παν αγαθον, και κακον εν τη αισθησει στερησις δε εστιν αισθησεως ὁ θανατος, ὑθεν γνωσις ορθη μηδεν ειναι προς ημας τον θανατον. Cicero has likewise a paragraph to the same effect. Tusc. Quæst. l. i. Natura vero sic se habet, ut quomodo, initium nobis rerum omnium ortus noster offerat, sic exitum mors; quæ ut nihil pertinuit ad nos ante ortum, sic nihil post mortem pertinebit. In quo quid potest esse mali, cum mors nec ad vivos pertineat, nec ad mortuos? alteri nulli sunt, alteros non attingit. "Thus nature has ordained it, that as our birth was, with respect to us, the beginning of all things, so death will be the destruction; and as death was nothing to us before we were born, so neither will it be after we are dead. What ill, then, can there be in death, since it appertains neither to the dead nor the living; to those who feel it not, or to those who exist not?"

Ver. 859. ——*with the din of war,*
*All shook tremendous heaven's high cope beneath,*] Mr. Wakefield conjectures that the verse, of which this passage is a translation, has some reference to the following line of Ennius preserved by Cicero, de Orat. iii. 42.

Africa terribili tremuit horrida terra tumultu.

With the tremendous tumult shook the shores
Of shuddering Afric.

Ver. 861. *And doubtful hung the scale which pow'r should rule*] Thus, Milton:

Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astræa and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth with balanc'd air
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms.

Par. Lost, iv. 996.

Sic, ubi non erimus, quom corporis atque animaï
Discidium fuerit, quibus e sumus uniter aptei ;
Scilicet haud nobis quidquam, quei non erimus tum,
Adcidere omnino poterit, sensumque movere :
Non, si terra mari miscebitur, et mare cœlo.
Et, si jam nostro sentit de corpore, post quam
Detracta est animi natura, animæque potestas ;
Nihil tamen est ad nos, quei comptu conjugioque
Corporis atque animæ consistimus uniter aptei.
Nec, si materiam nostram conlegerit ætas
Post obitum, rursumque redegerit, ut sita nunc est ;
Atque iterum nobis fuerint data lumina vitæ ;
Pertineat quidquam tamen ad nos id quoque factum,
Interrupta semel quom sit repetentia nostris ;
Et nunc nihil ad nos de nobis adtinet, ante
Quei fuimus : nec jam de illis non adficit, angor,
Quos de materiâ nostrâ nova proferet ætas.
Nam, quom respicias inmensi temporis omne

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Ver. 867. *Though earth with main, or main commix with skies.*] With this powerful verse may be compared the following couplet of Virgil, comprising the same imagery :

Jam *cælum terramque*, meo sine numine, Venti,
*Miscere*, et tantas audetis tollere moles ?
Æn. i. 137.

Dare ye, ye Winds ! without my mandate given,
Such tempests raise, and mingle earth with heav'n ?

Ver. 868. *E'en could the soul, the spirit still survive The wreck corporeal, and perception boast*, &c.] The whole of this passage is well translated by Dryden, excepting, indeed, that it has too much paraphrase :

Nay, e'en suppose, when we have suffer'd fate,
The soul could feel in her divided state ;
What's that to us ? for we are only we
While soul and body in one frame agree.
Nay, though our atoms should revolve by chance,
And matter leap into the former dance ;

So when we cease, and soul and body once
Meet their joint doom whose union form'd our lives,
No ill shall then molest us,—nought alarm
Our scatter'd senses, and dissever'd frame
Though earth with main, or main commix with skies.
E'en could the soul, the spirit still survive
The wreck corporeal, and perception boast,
To us what boots it, who exist alone
The joint result of soul and body mixt?
To us what boots it, should some future time
Collect our atoms, the dismantled frame
Restore entire, and e'en with life relume,
When once the mem'ry of ourselves is fled?
We heed not now what erst, in time elaps'd,
We have been, nor with anxious heart explore
What from our dust hereafter may arise:
For if thou weigh th' eternal tract of time
Evolv'd already, and the countless modes

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Though time our life and motion could restore,
And make our bodies what they were before,—
What gain to us would all this bustle bring?
The new-made man would be another thing.
When once an interrupting pause is made,
That individual being is decay'd;
We who are dead and gone shall bear no part
In all the pleasures, nor shall feel the smart
Which to that other mortal shall accrue,
Whom, of our matter, time would mould anew.
For backward if you look on that long space
Of ages past, and view the changing face
Of matter tost, and variously combin'd
In sundry shapes; 'tis easy for the mind
From hence t' infer that seeds of things have been
In the same order as they now are seen;
Which yet our dark remembrance cannot trace;
Because a pause of life, a gaping space
Has come betwixt, where memory lies dead,
And all the wand'ring motions from the sense are fled.

Præteritum spatium; tum motus materiaï
Multimodei quam sint; facile hocc' adcredere possis,
Semina sæpe in eodem, ut nunc sunt, ordine posta:
Nec memori tamen id quimus reprehendere mente;
Inter enim jacta est vitaï pausa, vageque
Deerrarunt passim motus ab sensibus omnes.
Debet enim, misere est quoi forte ægreque futurum,
Ipse quoque esse in eo tum tempore, quoi male possit
Adcidere: id quoniam mors eximit, esseque prohibet
Illum, quoi possint inconmoda conciliari
Hæc eadem, quibus e nunc nos sumus, ante fuisse;
Scire licet nobis nihil esse in morte timendum:
Nic miserum fieri, qui non est, posse; neque hilum
Differre, a nullo fuerit jam tempore natus;
Mortalem vitam mors quom inmortalis ademit.

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Ver. 894. ——*the man*
*To be who ceases, ceases from all woe*;] To the same effect, Solomon, who, as I have already had occasion to observe, was a Sadducean Hebrew, and, consequently, a disbeliever in the immortality of the soul. "The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not any thing; neither have they any more reward, for even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, too, and their hatred, and their envy, are, at this time, perished; neither have they any more, for ever, a portion in any thing that is done under the sun." Ecl. ix. 5, 6.

Ver. 896. *Nor aught imports it that he e'er was born,*
*When death immortal claims his mortal life.*] If the soul perish with the body, the man who is dead has no more connection with any kind of feeling or animation, than if he had never been born. The original text is as true to this interpretation as words can be:

neque hilum
Differre, a nullo fuerit jam tempore natus;
Mortalem vitam mors quom inmortalis ademit;

and yet, neither Dryden, Marchetti, nor Guernier, appears to have had any clear conception of the poet's

In which all matter moves, thou canst not doubt
That oft its atoms have the form assum'd
We bear ourselves this moment—though the mind
Recals not now those scenes of being past;
For many a pause the discontinuous chain
Of life has sever'd, and full many a mode
Of motion sprung to every sense adverse.
He to whom pain hereafter is decreed
Must then exist whene'er that pain arrives.
But as the man, whose atoms erst have liv'd,
Lives now unconscious of ills then sustain'd,
By death since decompos'd, and ev'ry pow'r
Of sense and mem'ry scatter'd—hence we prove
Death holds no sting t' alarm us; that the man
To be who ceases, ceases from all woe;
Nor aught imports it that he e'er was born,
When death immortal claims his mortal life.

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meaning; while Creech has given him a rendering equally foreign from the subject, and opposite to what he intended. His version is as follows:

—the dead, *though they should all return*
*To life again*, would grieve no more, nor mourn
For evils past, than if they'd ne'er been born.

The alliteration, here introduced by Lucretius, is not uncommon. Burman, in his Anthologia, lib. ii. epig. 219, has recorded the following verses:

Mortaleis immortaleis flere si foret fas,
Flerent divæ Camænæ Nævium poetam.

Might but th' *immortals mortals* weep, the train
Of heavenly muses Nævius would bemoan.

And Stobæus has retained the ensuing distich in a fragment of Linus:

Ὧδε γαρ αθανατος θανατος περ παντα καλυπτει,
Θνητος εων· και παν θνησκει φθαρτον·

Thus, death immortal, mortal things subverts,
For all is finite, and as finite fails.

In the same manner, Milton:

——and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men. Par. Lost, iii. 267.

Nor has Marchetti been inattentive to the same figure:

——a cui tolta
Fu da *morte immortal vita mortale*.

Proinde, ubi se videas hominem indignarier ipsum,
Post mortem fore, ut aut putescat corpore posto,
Aut flammis interfiat, malisve ferarum;
Scire licet, non sincerum sonere, atque subesse
Cæcum aliquem cordi stimulum; quam vis neget ipse
Credere se quemquam sibi sensum in morte futurum.
Non, ut opinor, enim dat, quod promittit et unde,
Nec radicitus e vitâ se tollit, et eicit;
Sed facit esse sui quiddam super inscius ipse.
Unus enim sibi quom proponit quisque, futurum
Corpus utei volucres lacerent in morte, feræque;
Ipse sui miseret: neque enim se dividit hilum,

Ver. 898. *Should'st thou, then, mark some fool, indignant, burn*] The common editions of the original uniformly offer the following verse:

Proinde, ubi se videas hominem *miserarier* ipsum,

which Mr. Wakefield, with commendable sagacity, has thus corrected from better authorities:

Proinde, ubi se videas hominem *indignarier* ipsum.

Democritus, though he denied the existence of an immaterial soul, yet as a great part of the human system is composed of intelligent atoms according to his hypothesis, was doubtful whether these atoms might not retain some feeling after death. The Pythagorean disciple, however, appears, from the following lines of Ovid, spoken in the character of Pythagoras himself, to have been as frequently subject to the same cowardly apprehensions as the disciples of Democritus:

O genus attonitum gelidæ formidine mortis.
Quid Styga, quid tenebras, quid nomina vana timetis,
Materiem vatum, falsique piacula mundi?
Corpora sive rogus flammâ, seu tabe vetustas
Abstulerit, mala posse pati non ulla putetis.
Morte carent animæ; semperque, priore relicta
Sede, novis domibus habitant, vivuntque receptæ.
L. xv. 153.

O race, that start at Death's funereal gloom!
Why fear ye Styx, or stories of the tomb?
The vain conceits by priests, and poets told,
Lies that the world in pious bondage hold?
No pain ye feel, dissever how ye may,
By blazing pyres, or Time's remote decay.
Souls never die; one mansion left behind,
They seek another, and another find.

It is astonishing to remark the dread that prevailed amongst the multitude of former times, and even as just noticed, the followers of many ancient philosophers, lest the corpse itself should continue to suffer during its consumption. Our poet expressly adverts to the alarm so generally excited by the mere idea of being devoured, after death, by a beast or

Should'st thou, then, mark some fool indignant burn
At this alone, that, when existence fails,
His corse may moulder, or in flames consume,
Or sate, perchance, the jaws of savage beasts,—
Believe him not:—some secret dread still lurks
Of future pain, though e'en his lips deny
That sense, or thought can after death exist.
Thus, if I err not, he conceals his creed,
Believes not life all-ceases, but that still
Some future self his present will survive.
For he who, living, shudders at the thought
That birds or beasts his frame may soon devour,
That frame divides not, but his self confounds

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bird of prey; and intimates, that something of the same terror was attached to the contemplation of every mode in which the deceased body could be disposed of. Of these different modes, the two most common, as I have already observed, were those of burying and burning, by which the corpse becomes a prey to the *worm*, or to the *flame*; and it is to these two general modes of bestowing the body after death, and the torment attached to them by the multitude, that Isaiah refers, in the following declaration of Jehovah, ch. lxvi. 24:

ויצאו וראו בפגרי
האנשים הפשעים בי׃
כי תולעתם לא תמות
ואשם לא תכבה
והיה דראון לכל בשר׃

And they shall go forth, and behold the carcases
Of the men who transgressed against me:
For *their worm* shall *not* die,
Neither shall *their fire* be quenched:
And they shall be an abhorrence unto all flesh.

It is to this passage, and this common feeling of the day, that our Saviour, who ever employed sensible images, adverts, in thus delineating the torments reserved for the wicked in the future world, "where *their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.*" Mark ix. 44. The Greek is a precise version of the Hebrew: Οπου ὁσκωληξ αυτων ου τελευτᾳ, και το πυρ ου σβεννυται.

Ver. 910. *That frame divides not,*——] There is an obscurity in the original, which appears to have arisen from a loss of the true reading of this verse. In the common editions, we meet with it thus:

Ipse sui miseret; neque enim se *vindicat* hilum;

In Mr. Wakefield's impression, corrected from a careful comparison of the best copies:

Ipse sui miseret, neque enim se *dividit* hilum:

but, still dissatisfied with the verse, he proposes the following reading of his own:

Nec removet satis, a projecto corpore; et illud
Se fingit, sensuque suo contaminat adstans.
Hinc indignatur se mortalem esse creatum;
Nec videt, in verâ nullum fore morte alium se,
Qui possit vivus sibi se lugere peremptum,
Stansque jacentem se lacerari, urive, dolere.
Nam, si in morte malum est, malis morsuque ferarum
Tractari; non invenio, quî non sit acerbum,
Ignibus inpositum, calidis torrescere flammis;
Aut in melle situm subfocari, atque rigere
Frigore, quom summo gelidi cubat æquore saxi;

Ipse sui miseret; neque enim se *dividit ipsum*,
Nec removet, satis a projecto corpore; *at illum*
Se fingit.——

The meaning of our poet, however, is obvious, and the translators do not differ greatly in their interpretations. The man, who trembles at the thought that his body may be hereafter exposed to the ravages of birds or beasts, or to any other similar destruction of its component parts, does not divide or distinguish between the dead and the living machine; but secretly apprehends, that the same consciousness and perception must appertain to each of them. Socrates, in his conversation with Crito, after having drank the fatal cup, is well known to have made a similar observation: "I can never," said he, "persuade Crito, that that alone is Socrates, which has the power of arranging his arguments, and of conversing with you; for he perpetually conceives, that what he will presently behold dead is myself. He confounds me with my carcase." Plut. in Phæd.

Ver. 917. *If, too, the tiger's tusk, the vulture's beak*
*Be deem'd an ill—what minor ill results*
*From the red fury*, &c.——] The poet alludes to the different modes of sepulture adopted by ancient nations. The poorer classes were interred in public cemeteries beyond the walls, or immediate boundary of the town in which they died, in a sunk, unnoticeable grave, without the more modern appendage of hillocks or tomb-stones. Of the richer classes, the bodies of great numbers were burnt to ashes on a magnificent pyre, and the ashes carefully collected, and deposited in an ornamented urn; while others were embalmed after the Egyptian manner, with an anti-putrescent preparation composed of honey and spices, and then removed to some stone or marble tomb provided for the express purpose. Heraclides of Pontus advised the former mode of sepulture; Democritus, the latter; Lucretius attacks them both with much severity for expressing any anxiety upon the subject.

That honey was the principal ingredient in the preparation of the embalmer, we learn from the following statement of Xenophon, which relates to the body of Agesipolis king of Sparta, lib. v. 3, 19, Helen. Και εκεινος μεν, εν μελιτι τεθεις, και κομισθεις οικαδε, ετυχε της βασιλικης ταφης. "Upon his death, his corse was immersed in honey, and being thus conveyed home, was interred in the royal sepulchre."

With his own future corse, whose dread decay
This self, he deems, must witness and partake.
Hence heaves his heart indignant at the doom
Of mortal man: heedless that, after death,
No other self shall then himself bemoan,
Nor feel the tooth that tears his mangled limbs.
If too, the tiger's tusk, the vulture's beak,
Be deem'd an ill—what lighter ill results
From the red fury of the fun'ral pyre?
The fulsome tide of honey, o'er the frame
Pour'd, cold and stiff'ning in the marble tomb?

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The body of Alexander the Great is well known to have been preserved in the same manner: and it is unquestionable, that the following couplet of Statius refers to this circumstance:

Duc et ad Æmathios manes, ubi belliger urbis
Conditor, Hyblæo perfusus nectare, durat.
Silv. III. ii. 117.

Go, search the tombs; th' Æmathian victor's there,
Steep'd in the nectar Hybla's blossoms bear.

It is a curious coincidence of circumstances, that, while the British conquests in Asia are rapidly approaching on the west, or rather perhaps have already reached the limits of the conquests of this bold and successful warrior, the costly tomb to which his remains were committed, and to which our poet, in all probability, alludes, should be at this moment in the possession of the same country. For that the large and beautiful sarcophagus, surrendered, among many other curious antiquities, by Gen. Menou to lord Hutchinson, upon the capture of Alexandria, and now in the British Museum, was the identical tomb in which the corse of Alexander was deposited after his death and embalming, has been of late incontrovertibly proved by the conjoint and very erudite, as well as entertaining, researches of Dr. Clarke, and my learned friend the Rev. S. Henley.

The custom of embalming is supposed to have originated in Egypt: whence the Hebrews, and especially after the residence of Joseph in that country, introduced it very generally among themselves. The body of Jacob was therefore prepared in this manner, the process occupying forty days before its completion; some time after which, it was conveyed, with much funeral pomp, to the sepulchre he had excavated in Canaan. See Gen. cap. l. 2, 3. The body of our Saviour was intended, by Joseph of Arimathea, to whom Pilate had granted it, to have been preserved in the same way: it was accordingly enveloped in clean linen, and deposited in its appropriate tomb; and the materials were actually prepared, when, by his resurrection, he rendered the friendly interposition of Joseph and his female disciples unnecessary. Luke, ch. xxiii. v. 50—56. xxiv. 1—3.

Artemisia, on the contrary, so widely celebrated for her conjugal affection and grief, preferred, as we learn from Gellius, the funeral pyre for the dead body of Mausolus, to the antiputrescent preparation of the embalmer. She erected a magnificent monument to his memory, on which his virtues were recorded in a prize epitaph. But, instead of committing the ashes of the corse to an urn, and melting this urn in the

Urguerive, superne obtritum, pondere terræ.
" Nam jam non domus adcipiet te læta, neque uxor
" Optuma, nec dulces obcurrent oscula natei
" Præripere, et tacitâ pectus dulcedine tangent.

monument consistently with general practice, the violence of her affliction induced her to swallow some portion of the ashes every day with her common beverage, till she had consumed the whole, and had thus constituted, of her own person, the tomb of her beloved husband. For a farther account of the ceremony of Grecian sepulture, see note on Book VI. v. 1330.

Ver. 918. ——*what lighter ill results*
*From the red fury of the fun'ral pyre?*
*The fulsome tide of honey o'er the frame*
*Pour'd, cold and stiff'ning in the marble tomb?*
*Or the sunk grave, by earth's vast pressure*
*crush'd?*] This passage is obviously imitated, in the following verses of Dr. Glynn's "Day of Judgment:"

——What, though the great,
With costly pomp and *aromatic sweets*,
Embalm'd his poor remains; or through the dome
A thousand tapers shed their gloomy light,
While solemn organs to his parting soul
Chaunted slow orisons?—Say, by what mark
Dost thou discern him from that lowly swain
Whose mouldering bones, *beneath the thorn-bound turf*
Long lay neglected?

Ver. 923. "*But thy dear house shall never greet thee more!*] This address is inimitably beautiful, and requires no critical finger to point out, either the delicacy of its pathos, or the strength of its argument. It is a perfect copy of the Athenian dirge; in the composition of which, the poet appears to have had a reference to that part of Plato's Axiochus which commences, Ηδονας δε ποτε τε του Προδικου λεγοντος, &c. The passage is too long for transcription: the learned reader may consult it at his leisure.

The Athenians were peculiarly celebrated for their dirges, or funeral orations; and Nardius, in an elaborate dissertation on this subject, has judiciously instanced the present address, as a proof of the elegance and feeling which they introduced into compositions of this sort. No nation, indeed, however barbarous and uncultivated, is without a dirge, or lamentation of some sort, in which the virtues of the deceased, and the irreparable loss sustained by his friends, are rudely and clamorously, but at the same time feelingly and forcibly, insisted upon. As mankind acquire a greater degree of taste and polish, this inharmonious howl is exchanged for the graces of pathetic poetry, and the metrical dirge and elegy are sure to succeed. Among the Greeks, however, the dirge acquired an excellence, and was rewarded with a liberality unknown to modern nations. The verses of which it consisted were uniformly adapted to music, and repeated, not only over the grave, or funeral pyre, according to the mode in which the remains of the deceased were disposed of, but were afterwards recited, in a full band, during the exhibition of funeral games and exercises, performed shortly afterwards at the place of sepulture. This extravagant pageantry, which was bestowed on all whose pecuniary circumstances were equal to it, was, nevertheless, quadrupled upon the death of a favourite patriot or warrior: on which occasions, the expence incurred was enormous, and always discharged out of the public purse. The death of Evagoras affords us an instance of this extreme prodigality; for his funeral was celebrated with games of almost every description; with poetry, music, gymnastic exercises, horse-races, galley-prizes, and public feasting without limits. In like manner, on the arrival, in the harbour at Corinth, of the ashes of Demetrius, which were conveyed in a golden urn, covered with a magnificent canopy, and surmounted with a regal crown, a troop of young noblemen were deputed to receive the splendid present on its landing; and Xenophantus, the most celebrated musician of his age, was commanded to exert himself to the utmost in rehearsing

Or the sunk grave, by earth's vast pressure crush'd ?
" But thy dear home shall never greet thee more !
" No more the best of wives !—thy babes belov'd,
" Whose haste half-met thee, emulous to snatch 925

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the funeral dirge which was composed on the occasion. The rowers had been previously instructed to perform a part in the solemn service, and they responded to the elegy with mournful ejaculations, while their oars struck in pathetic cadence to the measure of the sacred music. The history is related at large in Plutarch's life of this prince.

From the universality of this custom of funeral dirges in all ages, but particularly in the earlier, Gessner has, with great propriety, introduced it into the burial service of Abel—the first mortal who ever felt the stroke of death. The address, on this occasion, is as beautiful as it is pathetic ; and I eagerly insert it in the present place, with a view of proving how superior are the consolations of revealed religion to the most forcible supports of ancient philosophy : O wie erbärmlich liegt seine hülle da ! du unser trost, du unser entzücken, Abel ! ach du hast uns verlassen ; und unser süsses geschäfte wird seyn, um dich zu weinen, bis in die stunde unsers todes um dich zu weinen. Ja, du bist hinübergegangen in die seligkeit, deren erwartung dir so manche heilige thrän' entlorkte ; deren enwartung mir so manche thran' entlockt. O wir weinen dir nach, aus diesem schatten des todes dir nach ! du hast uns verlassen, und unser süsses geschäfte wird seyn, bis in die gewünschte stunde des todes um dich zu weinen. Death of Abel, Book V. " O how woeful is the sight of his extended corse ! thou, our consolation, thou, our delight ! Abel ! ah, thou hast left us, and our sweetest employment shall be to weep over thee ; to the hour of death to weep over thee. Yes, thou art now in possession of that felicity, the contemplation of which has drawn from thee so many holy tears ; the contemplation of which has drawn so many tears from myself. But O ! we still weep for thee—still weep for thee in these shadows of death ! Thou hast left us, and, till the wished-for hour of death, we will weep over thee."

With these two elegant specimens of funeral oration, the reader may compare that inimitable dirge, the first of which we have any account, contained in the lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan. 2 Sam. i. 19. The whole compass of Grecian poetry has nothing equal to it :

O roe of Israel ! slain art thou in thine own fastnesses !
How are the mighty fallen !—
Speak not in Gath ; keep silence in the streets of Askalon :
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

Mountains of Gilboa ! and ye lofty fields !
Let neither dew nor rain fall upon you :
For there the useless shield of the mighty was thrown away ;
The shield of Saul no longer anointed with unction.
From the blood of the brave, from the strength of the valiant,
The bow of Jonathan recoiled not,
Nor the sword of Saul returned empty.

Worthy of love were Saul and Jonathan,
Dear to each other in their lives,
And in their deaths not divided.
More swift were they than eagles,
More courageous than lions.

Lament, ye daughters of Israel ! over Saul,
Who clothed you in delightful scarlet ;
Who adorned your apparel with golden trinkets.
How are the mighty fallen
In the midst of the battle !

O Jonathan ! slain hast thou been upon thine own fastnesses !
Agonized am I for thee, my brother Jonathan !
Delicious hast thou been unto me ;
Wonderful was thy love for me, beyond the love of women.

" Non poteris factis florentibus esse; tuisque
" Præsidium: misero misere," aiunt, " omnia ademit
" Una dies infesta tibi tot præmia vitæ."
Illud in hiis rebus non addunt: " Nec tibi earum
" Jam desiderium rerum insidet insuper unâ."
Quod bene si videant animo, dictisque sequantur,

How are the mighty fallen!
And the weapons of war perished!

Ver. 924. ——" *Thy babes belov'd,*
" *Whose haste half met thee, emulous to snatch*
" *The dulcet kiss*——] I must not here forbear to quote a beautiful passage of Homer, towards which, as Lambinus has justly observed, Lucretius appears to have thrown his eye in this exquisite delineation, and whence, perhaps, he drew the rudiments of one of his most pathetic traits:

Οτι μαλ' ου δηιος, ος αθανατοισι μαχοιτο,
Ουδ' ετι μιν παιδες ποτι νουιασι παπταζουσιν
Ελθοντ' εκ πολεμοιο, και αινης δηιοτητος. Il. E. 407.

Know thou, whoe'er with heavenly power contends,
Short is his date, and soon his glory ends.
From fields of death, when late he shall retire,
*No infant on his knees shall call him sire.* Pope.

But though Lucretius may, perhaps, with respect to one idea, be a copyist of Homer, Virgil is a far closer copyist of Lucretius. Yet he has written, as Dr. Warton judiciously asserts, with less tenderness and effect:

Interea *dulces* pendent circum *oscula nati*:
Casta pudicitiam servat *domus*. Georg. ii. 523.

He feels the father's and the husband's bliss,
His infants climb, and struggle for a kiss;
His modest house strict chastity maintains.
Warton.

Our own language boasts of a variety of imitations of this elegiac and exquisite passage: of which several are possessed of great feeling and simplicity. The following is from the pathetic muse of Gray:

For them, no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy *housewife* ply her evening care;
*No children run, to lisp their sire's return,*
*Or climb his knees, the envied kiss to share.*

The two last lines are, very nearly, a verbal translation. The next imitation to which I shall refer, is by Thomson: it is freer than that of Gray; but executed with equal felicity. It occurs in his Winter, to which season it particularly adverts:

In vain for him th' *officious wife* prepares
The fire fair-blazing, and the vestment warm:
In vain, *his little children*, peeping out
Into the mingled storm, *demand their sire*
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
*Nor wife nor children more shall he behold,*
*Nor friends, nor sacred home.* Ver. 311.

It is not unlikely that Thomson, rather than Lucretius, has been copied in this delineation by Klopstock, in the following verses, which comprise a part of the meditations of the repentant Abadonna:

Soll ich gehen und schaun den mann, der dort mit dem tode,
Und mit gedanken von jenem gericht in schreckender angst ringt?
Soll ich sehen das blut des erschlagnen? Vielleicht, das er ruhig.
In den schatten der nacht forteilte, stammelnde kinder

" The dulcet kiss that rous'd thy secret soul,
" Again shall never hasten!—nor thine arm,
" With deed heroic, guard thy country's weal!—
" O mournful, mournful fate!" thy friends exclaim,
" One envious hour of these invalued joys
" Robs thee for ever!"—But they add not here,
" It robs thee, too, of all desire of joy :"
A truth, once utter'd, that the mind would free

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An dem halse der mutter mit vaterfreudun zu grüssen ;
Da erschlug ihn ein laurenderfeind, ein mörden im dunkeln! MESSIAS, GES. v.

Come, let me see the man that yonder lies
Dying, and wrung with anguish as he dies ;
And mark his gory wounds. In dead of night
Haply *he hasted, with a sire's delight,*
*To clasp his babes, that* round their mother's knee,
*Lisp'd his dear name.* These never shall he see!
By ruthless ruffians murder'd!—

Equally in point, with both these citations, is the following, by Collins ; affording a picture which yields to neither of them in tenderness or beauty. It comprises a part of his well-known description of the Kelpie, or water-fiend :

For him, in vain, his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way ;
For him, in vain, at to-fall of the day,
His babes shall linger at th' unclosing gate.—
Ah! ne'er shall he return!—

I add the following from Dyer, because, though it offers a parallel, if not a copied image, it directs it to a happier purpose. The poet is representing the agricultural providence of a worthy cottager with whom he was acquainted, and who never suffered the growth of useless trees about the few acres he occupied :

Only a slender tuft of useful ash,
And mingled beech, and elm, securely tall,
The little smiling cottage warm embower'd :
The little smiling cottage, where at eve
*He meets his rosy children at the door,*
*Prattling their welcomes, and his honest wife,*
With good brown cake, and bacon slice, intent
To cheer his hunger after labour hard.
FLEECE, Book I.

Of a purport precisely similar, and pregnant with similar imagery, is the ensuing address of a cottager to his beloved wife, from the Idyls of Gessner, with which I shall conclude this note. It occurs in his Herbstmorgen : Bey dir eingeschlossen mögen winde wüten, und schneegestöber die ganze aussicht rauben ; dann erst fühl ichs, wie du mir alles bist. Die fülle meines glückes seyd ihr, ihr anmuthsvolle kinder, mit jedem liebreitz der mutter geschmückt ; was für segen blüht in euch uns anf. Die erste silbe die sie euch stammeln lehrte, wars, mir zu sagen, dass ihr mich liebet. Wenn ihr, komm ich vom felde oder von der heerde zurück, an der schwelle mit frohem gewimmel mich ruffet ; an meinen knien hangend, mit kindischer freude die kleinen geschenke empfanget ; O wie erquicht mich dann jede eurer unschuldvollen freuden! " When seated by thee, let the pent-up winds put forth their rage ; let the snow-storm cover the face of the earth ; then chiefly feel I that thou art every thing to me. May the fulness of my prosperity be the lot of yourselves, ye lovely children! adorned with every grace of your mother, which blossoms as a blessing upon us both! The first syllable she taught you to lisp was to let me know that ye

Dissolvant animi magno se angore, metuque.
Tu quidem, ut es, lecto sopitus, sic eris, ævi
Quod super est, cunctis privatus doloribus ægris:
At nos horrifico cinefactum de prope busto
Insatiabiliter deflebimus; æternumque
Nulla dies nobis mœrorem e pectore demet.

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loved me. As I return from the field or the flock, joyfully ye throng together, and call to me from the sill of the door; and, clinging round my knees, receive, with childish rapture, the little presents I bring you—O how does your pure and innocent happiness transport me!"

Ver. 934. ——"*Thou art safe!*
"*The sleep of death protects thee! and secures*
"*From all th' unnumber'd woes of mortal life!*]

If our poet had his eye directed towards Homer in the former part of this pathetic dirge, it is at least equally probable that, in composing the verses, of which these now cited are a translation, he was not without recollecting the following lines from the same exquisite muse:

Αλλα με τεθνειωτα χυτη κατα γαια καλυπτοι,
Πριν γ' ετι σης τε δομης σου ὀ' ιλαθμοιο πυθεσθαι.
IL. Z. 463.

May I lie cold before that dreadful day,
Prest with a load of monumental clay.
Thy Hector, wrapt in *everlasting sleep*,
*Shall neither hear thee sigh, nor see thee weep.*
POPE.

There is also a passage in Virgil, so perfectly similar, that it is highly probable either Homer or Lucretius furnished him with the first conception of it:

Tum me confectum curis, *somnoque gravatum*
Infelix habuit thalamus; pressitque jacentem
*Dulcis et alta quies, placidæque similli[ma] mo[rti].*
ÆN. vi. [illegible].

Then, freed from cares, the funeral couch possess'd
My weary limbs, and lull'd to quiet rest;
To sweet, unbroken slumber, sound as death
When, in soft whispers, he demands the breath.

In the following exquisite and pathetic verses from the well-known epitaph on Bion by Moschus, the same metaphor of sleep, eternal sleep, is admirably introduced. The translation, which I shall subfix, is highly spirited, and entitled to much praise; though, in some measure, too araphrastic:

Α. αι τα μαλαχαι μεν επαν κατα κηπον ολωνται,
Ἡ τα χλωρα σελινα, το τ' ευθαλες, αὐξονται αὐτοι,
Υστερον αυ ζωοντι, και εις ετος αλλο φυοντι·
Ἡμεις δ' οι μεγαλοι και καρτεροι ηε σοφοι ανδρες,
Οππαν πρωτα θανωμες, ανακοοι εν χθονι κοιλα
Ευδομες εν μακρον ατερμονα υπνον αειρον.

The meanest herb we trample in the field,
Or in the garden nurture, when its leaf
At winter's touch is blasted, and its place
Forgotten, soon its vernal buds renews,
And, *from short slumber, wakes* to life again.
Man *wakes* no more! Man valiant, glorious, wise,
When death once chills him, *sinks in sleep profound,*
A long, unconscious, never-ending *sleep.*
GISBORNE.

Spencer has betrayed an obvious imitation of this beautiful address of Lucretius, in the following verses. But this is by no means wonderful; for we have often already detected him exploring our sublime bard for elegant description, and pathetic simplicity:

*He there doth now* enjoy *eternal rest,*
And happy ease, which thou dost want, and crave,
And further from it daily wanderest:
What, if some little pain the passage have,
That makes frail flesh to fear the bitter wave?

From every dread, and trouble. " Thou art safe!
" The sleep of death protects thee! and secures
" From all th' unnumber'd woes of mortal life!
" While we, alas! the sacred urn around
" That holds thine ashes, shall insatiate weep,
" Nor time destroy th' eternal grief we feel!"

Is not short pain well borne, that brings long ease,
*And lays the soul to sleep in quiet grave?*
*Sleep after toil*, port after stormy seas,
Ease after war, death after life, does greatly please.

FAIRY QUEEN.

Shakspeare has caught the spirit of the same metaphor, in the beginning of Hamlet's soliloquy:

To be, or not to be?—that is the question—
Whether 'tis nobler, in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them?—*to die—to sleep*—
No more! and, *by a sleep, to say we end*
*The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks*
*That flesh is heir to:—'tis a consummation*
*Devoutly to be wished!*

I cannot avoid adding to this imitation almost exquisite sonnet of Mrs. Charlotte Smith; as well on account of its sweet simplicity and pathos, as from its being in perfect unison with the imagery of the text:

*Oh thou! who sleep'st* where hazel bands entwine
The vernal grass, with paler violets drest,
I would, sweet girl! thy humble bed were mine,
And mine *thy calm and enviable rest.*
*For, never more, by human ills opprest,*
*Shall thy* soft *spirit* fruitlessly *repine:*
Thou canst not, now, thy fondest hope resign
E'en in the hour that should have made thee blest:
Light lies the turf upon thy gentle breast;
And, lingering here, to love and sorrow true,
The youth, who once thy simple heart possest,
Shall mingle tears with April's early dew,
*While still, for him, shall faithful memory save*
*Thy form and virtues from the silent grave.*

It is not improbable that this pensive poetess derived the first idea of this elegant and sentimental sonnet from the tender address of Mason to the spirit of his departed and dearly-beloved wife. The reader must excuse my adding it, long as this note already is, from the beginning of the first book of his ENGLISH GARDEN. He is not writing, the poet tells us, to "court the world's applause;"

No—tis to soothe
That agony of heart, which they, alone,
Who best have lov'd, who best have been belov'd,
Can feel, or pity; sympathy severe!
Which she too felt, when, on her pallid lip,
The last farewel hung trembling, and bespoke
A wish to linger here, and bless the arms
She left, for heaven. She died, and heaven is hers!
Be mine the pensive, solitary balm
That recollection yields. Yes, angel pure!
While Mem'ry holds her seat, thine image still
Shall reign, shall triumph there; and when, as now,
Imagination forms a nymph divine
To lead the fluent train, thy modest blush,
Thy mild demeanour, thy unpractis'd smile,
Shall grace that nymph, and sweet Simplicity
Be drest, (ah, meek Maria!) in thy charms.

Ver. 939. "*Nor time destroy th' eternal grief we feel.*] Thus Virgil, and in almost the same words:

Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet ævo.

ÆN. ix. 447.

No time your mem'ry ever shall destroy.

Illud ab hoc igitur quærundum est, quid sit amari
Tanto opere, ad somnum si res redit, atque quietem,
Quur quisquam æterno possit tabescere luctu?
Hocc' etiam faciunt, ubi discubuere tenentque
Pocula sæpe homines, et inumbrant ora coronis;

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And thus Ercilla, probably with an eye equally directed to the whole of this address of our own poet:

Que y â el dolor me ha puesto en tal estremo
Que mas la vida que la muerte temo.
Que no se mal que y à dañar me pueda
Ni ay bien mayor que no le aver tenido,
Accabese y fenezca lo que queda
Puesque mi dolce amigo ha fenecido.

For, in such grief I draw my lingering breath,
Life is my dread beyond the pangs of death:
There is no ill that now can wound my breast,
No good, but what I in my love possest.
Fly then! ye hours, that keep me from the dead;
For he, the spirit of my life, is fled.

HAYLEY.

Ver. 940. *What then has death, if death be mere repose,*
*And quiet only in a peaceful grave,*
*What has it thus to mar this life of man?*] Ovid has thus imitated this passage with much spirit and felicity:

Stulte, quid est somnus, gelidæ nisi mortis imago?
Longa quiescendi tempora fata dabunt.

AMOR. ii. 941.

Say, what is sleep, thou fool! but Death's repose?
And long the time for slumber fate bestows.

It is impossible, in this place, not to be reminded of the very elegant epigram of our late worthy poet-laureat, Dr. T. Warton, designed to have been placed beneath a statue of Sleep, in the classic garden of his friend Mr. Harris, and for the idea of which he was certainly indebted to Lucretius:

Somne levis! quanquam certissima mortis imago,
Consortem cupio te, tamen esse tori:
Alma quies, optata veni; nam, sic, sine vitâ
Vivere, quam suave est; sic sine morte, mori.

Dr. Walcot has well translated this; but the translation loses somewhat of the resemblance to Lucretius, which is contained in the original:

Come, gentle Sleep, attend thy votary's prayer,
And, though Death's image, to my couch repair!
How sweet, thus lifeless, yet with life to lie,
Thus, without dying, O how sweet to die!

These frequent imitations, however, by poets in later periods, are not in the least to be wondered at: for, as it is justly observed by Mr. Wakefield, "the lines in the present book, from ver. 858, to its conclusion, are to be ranked with the most noble monuments of ancient letters; not, indeed, yielding to any of the poetical efforts of Greece herself; so polished are they, and smooth, so serious, magnificent and pathetic, that nothing can possibly exceed them; and so deeply do they penetrate, as it were, to the very marrow of the soul." Haud dubitaverim affirmare hos ducenos et quinquagenos fere versus, ad hujusce libri finem, esse vel nobilissimis antiquarum literarum reliquiis annumerandos; neque ipsius quidem Græciæ pœtas velim excipi: adeo sunt omnia climata, numerosa, magnifica, gravia, παθητικα, ut nihil supra; et usque ad medullam animæ penetrantia. See his edition, Vol. II. p. 147.

Ver. 943. ——*E'en o'er the festive board,*
*The glass while grasping, and with garlands crown'd.*] Dryden has well paraphrased the whole of this passage, as he has, indeed, all the remaining verses of this book:

What then has death, if death be mere repose,
And quiet only in a peaceful grave,
What has it thus to mar this life of man?
Yet mar it does. E'en o'er the festive board,
The glass while grasping, and, with garlands crown'd,

When healths go round, and kindly brimmers flow,
Till the fresh garlands on their foreheads glow,
They whine and cry, "Let us make haste to live;
Short are the joys that human life can give!"
Eternal preachers! who corrupt the draught,
And pall the god, who never thinks, with thought:
Ideots! with all that thought, to whom the worst
Of death, is want of drink, and endless thirst.

Nothing was so common, amidst the festivals of all ancient nations, as the introduction of wreaths or garlands of flowers. In the nuptial ceremonies of the Hebrews, the bridegroom was always encircled with a costly ornament of this kind, which is the decoration referred to by Isaiah in cap. lxi. 10. and in some readings, is literally so rendered. It is also more clearly designated in various places of the Psalms, and especially in the Song of Songs. But, at other feasts, as well as at the bridal banquet, a similar chaplet was introduced: thus, in Lamentations, cap. v. 15.

The joy of our heart is ceased!
Our dance is turned into mourning!
The *crown is fallen from our heads!*

Anacreon is perpetually alluding to the same custom; and hence the following verses of Sophocles:

Κεινος ουτε στεφανων,
Ουτε ϑαδειαν κυλικων
Νειμειν εμοι τερψιν ὁμιλειν
Ουτε γλυκυν αυλων οτοϑον.

Ajax Flag.

By war disturb'd, the genial board
No longer will its sweets afford;
*Their fragrant odours round my head*
*The verdant wreaths no longer spread;*
Nor music's charms my soul delight.

Franklin.

Mr. Cumberland has hence, with much propriety, decorated Belial with a similar chaplet, whom Milton had before celebrated as the dæmon of wine and concupiscence:

——*around his temples twin'd*
*A wreath of roses;* and, where'er he pass'd,
His garments fann'd a breeze of rich perfume.

Calvary.

Among the Greeks and Romans, however, not only the visitors themselves were encircled with garlands of flowers, but even the servants, and the goblets as well. Thus, Homer:

——Κρατηρας επιστεψαντο ποτοιο:

Their flowing bowls they crown'd.

And Virgil:

Tum pater Anchises magnum cratera coronâ
Induit, implevitque mero.

Then round the bowl a *roseat crown* profuse
Anchises twin'd, and fill'd with sparkling juice.

At times, indeed, the floor itself of the room in which the festive train assembled, was completely strewed with roses and other odorous flowers; and Pliny expressly tells us, that this voluptuous ceremony was adopted to dispel, by the fragrancy of the perfume, that heaviness and stupefaction which too frequently succeed excessive drinking. Hist. Nat. xxi. 19. It is a custom still prevalent in Persia and Arabia, and is alluded to in the following stanza of Rakeek, one of the improvisatori minstrels of the latter country, who existed during the most flourishing period of the Caliphat. The translation is by Mr. Carlyle, and occurs in his specimens of Arabian poetry:

Though the peevish tongues upbraid,
Though the brows of wisdom scowl,

Ex animo ut dicant, " Brevis hicc' est fructus homullis :
" Jam fuerit ; neque post umquam revocare licebit !"
Tamquam in morte mali cum primis hoc sit eorum,
Quod sitis exurat miseros atque arida torreat,
Aut aliæ quoius desiderium insideat rei.
Nec sibi enim quisquam tum se vitamque requiret,
Quom pariter mens et corpus, sopita, quiescunt ;
Nam licet æternum per nos sic esse soporem :

---

Fair ones ! here *on roses laid,*
*Careless will we quaff the bowl.*

There is a custom of high antiquity still retained in Wales, which is not very different from this of Greece and Arabia ; but which, in point of innocence and picturesque effect, is far more commendable : I mean that of collecting and strewing roses, and other odoriferous flowers, at the annual village wake of sheep-shearing, antecedently to the banquet which is afterwards liberally provided for the artless and honest swains. These fragrant flowers, however, are not strewed in the open shade, under the coolness of which the feast is celebrated ; but, with a kind of religious rite, borrowed, perhaps, many an age ago, from the borderers upon the Ganges, sprinkled over the river, in whose purifying stream the ceremony of sheep-shearing has just been completed, and whose limpid fulness affords them the fairest promise of plenty for the ensuing year. Dyer, in his Fleece, has not neglected to avail himself of this picturesque custom ; and he thus notices it with true poetic skill :

——with light fantastic toe the nymphs
Thither assembled, thither every swain :
And o'er the dimpled stream a thousand flowers,
Pale lilies, roses, violets, and pinks,
Mixt with the greens of burnet, mint, and thyme,
And trefoil, sprinkled with their sportive arms.—
Such custom holds along th' irriguous vales,
From Wreakin's brow to rocky Dolvoryn,
Sabrina's early haunt, ere yet she fled
The search of Guendolen, her step-dame proud,
With envious hate enrag'd. The jolly cheer
Spread on a mossy bank, untouch'd abides
Till cease the rites ; and now the mossy bank
Is gaily circled, and the jolly cheer
Dispers'd in copious measures. Book I.

Ver. 948. *As if, in death, the worst such wretches fear'd*
*Were thirst unquenched, parching ev'ry nerve,*]

It is probable, our poetic moralist alludes, in this place, to the following of that hoary but musical drunkard, Anacreon :

Πολιαι στεφοισι καραν.
Δος ὑδωρ, βαλ' οινον ω παι,
Την ψυχην μου καρωσον.
Βρακυ μη ζωντα καλυπτεις,
Ο θανων ουκ επιθυμει. Ode xxxvi.

Thus elegantly, but diffusively translated by Mr. Moore :

Age begins to blanch my brow,
I've time for nought but pleasure now.
Fly—and cool my goblet's glow
At yonder fountain's gelid flow ;
I'll quaff, my boy, and calmly sink
This soul to slumber as I drink.
Soon, too soon, my jocund slave,
You'll deck your master's grassy grave ;

The thoughtless maniacs oft indignant roar,
" How short the joys of wine!—e'en while we drink
" Life ceases, and to-morrow ne'er returns!"
As if, in death, the worst such wretches fear'd
Were thirst unquenched, parching ev'ry nerve,
Or deem'd their passions would pursue them still.
Not anxious, thus, mankind the world resign
At evening hour when soul and body rest;

---

And there's an end; for ah! you know
They drink but little wine below.

The Arabian poet Tarafa, however, surpasses Anacreon infinitely in his devotion to the pleasures of drinking; and, in the language of our poet, seems literally afraid of unquenchable thirst after death. It is thus he expresses himself in his Albecriyyo, one of the seven poems that, on account of their merit, were transcribed in letters of gold, and suspended, where indeed we should scarcely have expected to find a poem of this description, in the temple at Mecca:

Fadherneí arawweí hámeteí feí hhayáhhá
Mekháfahá shirbin' feí álhhayáhi mosáarredi
Careímon' yorawweí nafsaho feí hhayátihi
Setâlamo ín mutná gadán' áyyoná álsádeí

"Suffer me, whilst I live, to drench my head with wine, lest, having drunk too little in my lifetime, I should be thirsty in another state.

"A man of my generous spirit drinks his full draught to-day; and to-morrow, when we are dead, it will be known which of us has not quenched his thirst." Sir W. Jones.

Ver. 946. ——" *e'en while we drink*
" *Life ceases*,——] Juvenal has elegantly imitated this querulous and impertinent observation of the drinking debauchee in the following verses:

Nunc mihi quid suades post damnum temporis, et spes
Deceptas? Festinat enim decurrere, velox
Flosculus, angustæ, miseræque brevissima vitæ
Portio: *dum bibimus, dum serta*, unguenta puellas,
Poscimus, obrepit non intellecta senectus.
Sat. ix. 125.

Now what's thy antidote for hopes destroy'd?
Time basely murder'd? pleasures unenjoy'd?
Lo! the brief blossom hastens to decay
That, mid its sufferings, soothes life's little day.
E'en *while we drink*, while girls and *garlands* cheer,
And flowing ointments—ideot age is here.

Ver. 949. —*thirst unquenched, parching every nerve*,] This metaphorical mode of expressing the effect of extreme thirst is by no means uncommon, either in ancient or modern times. Thus, Ovid:

Copia nulla famem relevit: *sitis arida guttur*
*Urit.*——
Met. xi. 129.

No store contents him; *thirst unquenched* still
*Burns* all his throat.

And Mr. Cumberland, in his Calvary, describing the punishment of Satan:

Panting he roll'd in streams of scalding sweat,
*Parch'd with intolerable thirst*; one drop
Of water then to cool his raging tongue
Had been a boon worth all his golden shrines.

Nec desiderium nostri nos adtigit ullum:
Et tamen haud quaquam nostros tunc illa per artus
Longe ab sensiferis primordia motibus errant;
Quom conreptus homo ex somno se conligit ipse.
Multo igitur mortem minus ad nos esse putandum est:
Si minus esse potest, quam quod nihil esse videmus.
Major enim turbæ disjectus materiaï
Consequitur leto; nec quisquam expergitus exstat,
Frigida quem semel est vitaï pausa sequuta.

Denique, si vocem rerum Natura repente
Mittat, et hocc' aliquoi nostrûm sic increpet ipsa:
" Quid tibi tanto opere est, Mortalis, quod nimis ægris
" Luctibus indulges? Quid mortem congemis, ac fles?
" Nam, gratum fuerit tibi vita ante acta, priorque,
" Et non omnia, pertusum congesta quasi in vas,
" Conmoda perfluxere, atque ingrata interiere;
" Quur non, ut, plenus vitæ, conviva, recedis,
" Æquo animoque capis securam, stulte, quietem?

---

Ver. 972. " *Why quit'st thou not, thou fool! the feast of life*
" *Fill'd,*——] Horace has an imitation of this passage, in the following verses:

Unde fit ut raro, qui se vixisse beatum
Dicat, et exacto contentus tempore *vitæ*
*Cedat, uti conviva satur*, reperire queamus. Sat. i. 1.

Whence thus unfrequent see we that the man,
Who, blest through life, has reach'd its utmost span,

Nor would they though that rest were ne'er to end:
Nor thus the day's desire pursues their dreams;
Though then the seeds of sense not wander far
From sensile movements, scarcely, oft, allay'd,
And quick resum'd when starts the soul at morn.
Of much less moment, then, should death be held
Than sleep, if aught can less than that which ne'er
Moment excites whatever; for the crowd
Of sensile seeds are wider here disperst;
Nor wakes he e'er to action, and the day,
Whose frame once feels the chilling pause of life.
Were then THE NATURE OF CREATED THINGS
To rise abrupt, and thus repining man
Address—" O mortal! whence these useless fears?
" This weak, superfluous sorrow? why th' approach
" Dread'st thou of death? For if the time elaps'd
" Have smil'd propitious, and not all its gifts,
" As though adventur'd in a leaky vase,
" Been idly wasted, profitless, and vain—
" Why quit'st thou not, thou fool! the feast of life
" Fill'd,—and with mind all panting for repose?

---

Should, like the guest, contented with his fare,
Rise from the feast, nor ask an ampler share.

Thus, too, Cicero, de Senectute, ad fin. Ex vita ita discedo, tanquam ex hospitio, non tamen ex domo: commorandi enim natura diversorium nobis, non habitandi dedit. " I depart from life as from a caravansary, and not from a home; for nature has given to us a house of entertainment rather than a mansion."

" Sin ea, quæ fructus quomque es, periere profusa;
" Vitaque in obfenso est; quur amplius addere quæris,
" Rursum quod pereat, mali, et ingratum obcidat omne?
" Non potius vitæ finem jacis, atque laboris?
" Nam, tibi præterea quod machiner inveniamque,
" Quod placeat, nihil est: eadem sunt omnia semper.
" Si tibi non annis corpus jam marcet, et artus
" Confectei languent; eadem tamen omnia restant,
" Omnia si perges vivendo vincere secla;
" Atque etiam potius, si numquam sis moriturus:"—
Quid respondemus, nisi justam intendere litem
Naturam, et veram verbis exponere caussam?

At, qui obitum lamentetur miser amplius æquo,
Non merito inclamet magis, et voce increpet acri?
" Aufer, ab hinc, lacrumas, Barathre, et conpesce querelas."
Grandior heic vero si jam, seniorque, queratur:
" Omnia perfunctus vitaï præmia, marces;
" Sed, quia semper aves, quod abest, præsentia temnis,

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Ver. 979. —" *things for ever things succeed*
" *Unchang'd,—and would do, though revolving years*, &c.] To the same effect, Sophocles:

Αισχρον γαρ ανδρα του μακρου χρηζειν βιου,
Κακοισιν ὁστις μηδεν εξαλλασσεται.
Τι γαρ παρ' ημαρ ἡμερα τερπειν εχει,
Προσθεισα καναθεισα του γε κατθανειν. Ajax, Flag.

When life but teems with unremitted woes
'Tis poor in man to wish a longer date:
For what can day on day, and year on year,
But put off wish'd-for death, and lengthen pain?
Franklin.

Ver. 992. " *What! thou lament? already who hast reap'd*
" *An ample harvest?*——] If an interpreter

" But if thyself have squander'd every boon,
" And of the past grown weary—why demand
" More days to kill, more blessings to pervert,
" Nor rather headlong hasten to thine end?
" For nothing further can my powers devise
" To please thee;—things for ever things succeed
" Unchang'd,—and would do, though revolving years
" Should spare thy vigour, and thy brittle frame
" Live o'er all time: e'en amplier would'st thou then
" Mark how unvaried all creation moves."—
Were Nature thus t' address us, could we fail
To feel the justice of her keen rebuke?
So true the picture, the advice so sage!
But to the wretch who moans th' approach of death
With grief unmeasur'd, louder might she raise
Her voice severe—" Vile coward! dry thine eyes—
" Hence with thy sniv'lling sorrows, and depart!"
Should he, moreo'er, have past man's mid-day hour—
" What! thou lament? already who hast reap'd

---

were necessary in this place, Terence would readily supply the office, by the following apt parallelism:

—Nihil pol jam isthæc mihi res voluptatis ferunt:
Dum ætatis tempus tulit, perfuncta satis sum:
satias jam tenet
Studiorum istorum: hæc mihi nunc cura est maxuma, ut ne cui mea
Longinquitas ætatis obstet; mortemve expectet meam.
Heic video me esse invisam inmerito: tempus est concedere. Heaut. IV. iii. 17.

For joys like these I care not, at this hour;
I've had my portion, and still own their pow'r.
Now all I ask for is, that I may ne'er
Rob, by long life, another of his share;
Tempt him my death to long for, as too slow,
And hate my sight;—I feel 'tis time to go.

" Inperfecta tibi elabsa est, ingrataque, vita;
" Et nec opinanti mors ad caput adstitit ante,
" Quam satur, ac plenus, possis discedere, rerum.
" Nunc aliena tuâ tamen ætate omnia mitte,
" Æquo animoque, age dum, magnis concede; necesse est:"
Jure, ut opinor, agat; jure increpet, inciletque.
Cedit enim, rerum novitate extrusa, vetustas
Semper, et ex aliis aliud reparare necesse est:
Nec quisquam in barathrum, nec Tartara deditur atra.
Materies opus est, ut crescant postera secla:
Quæ tamen omnia te, vitâ perfuncta, sequentur:
Nec minus ergo ante hæc, quam tu, cecidere cadentque.
Sic alid ex alio numquam desistet oriri:
Vitaque mancipio nulli datur, omnibus usu.

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Ver. 993. ——" *by desiring thus*
" *The past once more, the present thou abhor'st,*] Our poet refers to the following passage of Democritus: Ανοημονες των απεοντων ορεγονται· τα δε παρεοντα, και παρωχημενων κερδαλεωτερα εοντα, αμαλδευνουσιν. The text itself renders an express version superfluous.

Ver. 998. " *Leave, then, to others bliss thy years should shun;*
" *Come, chearful leave it, since still leave thou must.*"] Thus, Horace, to the same effect; and, as Lambinus has observed, with an eye directed to this passage of our own poet:

Vivere si recte nescis, decede peritis.
Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti;
Tempus abire tibi est. Ep. ii. 2.

Life now grown tasteless, from its banquet rise,
And leave to others who may better prize.
Deep hast thou drench'd its sports, its feats, its wine,—
To others leave them, to depart is thine.

To the same effect is the following passage of Persius, deriving an equal benefit from the labours of our poet:

Indulge genio; carpamus dulcia; nostrum est
Quod vivis: cinis, et manes, et fabula fies.
Vive memor lethi: fugit hora. Sat. v. 151.

" An ample harvest? by desiring thus
" The past once more, the present thou abhor'st,
" And life flies on imperfect, unenjoy'd,
" And death untimely meets thee, ere thy soul,
" Cloy'd with the banquet, is prepar'd to rise.
" Leave, then, to others bliss thy years should shun;
" Come chearful leave it, since still leave thou must."
Justly I deem might Nature thus reprove:
For, through creation, old to young resigns,
And this from that matures; nor aught descends
To the dread gulphs, the fancied shades of hell.
The mass material must survive entire
To feed succeeding ages, which, in turn,
Like thee shall flourish, and like thee shall die;
Nor more the present ruins than the past.
Thus things from things ascend; and life exists
To none a freehold, but a use to all.

---

Ah! think, vain schemer! how the moments fly;
The instant now observ'd, is time gone by:
Seize, then, the hour; thy way with roses strew,
Thy days make happy, for they must be few:
Enjoy the world, ere yet oblivion be,
And dust and ashes all that rest of thee.

Drummond.

Ver. 1005. ——*succeeding ages, which, in turn,*
*Like thee shall flourish, and like thee shall die;*] There is an apposite and admirable description of the same kind in the Berrathon of Ossian, Vol. II. p. 105: " The chiefs of other times are departed: the sons of future years shall pass away; another race shall arrive. The people are like the waves of ocean; like the leaves of woody Morven, they pass away in the rustling blast, and other leaves lift their green heads on high." In like manner, Dyer, with a parallel idea, in his Ruins of Rome:

——so revolves the scene;
So time ordains, who rolls the things of pride
From dust again to dust.

Ver. 1008. ——*life exists*
*To none a freehold, but a use to all.*] This elegant apophthegm, so forcibly expressed by our poet, comprises the sum and substance of every moral virtue. It is well translated by Marchetti:

Respice item, quam nihil ad nos ante acta vetustas
Temporis æterni fuerit, quam nascimur, ante.
Hocc' igitur speculum nobis Natura futuri
Temporis exponit post mortem denique nostram.
Num quid ibi horribile adparet? Num triste videtur
Quidquam? Non omni somno securius exstat?
Atqui animarum etiam, quæquomque Acherunte profundo
Prodita sunt esse, in vitâ sunt omnia nobis:

---

E fu dalla natura il viver dato
A nessun in mancipio, a tutti in uso.

Euripides had long before observed:

——ου τι γαρ κεκτημεθα
Ἡμετερον, αυτο πλην, εικησαι δικον. Suppl. 535.

For not our own the life we hold, nor thus
Should man compute it.

And Bentley has quoted a passage upon the present occasion, from Pedo Albinovanus, strongly expressive of the same idea:

Vita data est utenda; data est sine fœnore nobis
Mutua, nec certa persoluenda die.

Cowper appears to have had our poet in his recollection, in the following sentence:

—— human life
Is but a loan, to be repaid with use. Task iii.

Ver. 1010. *Reflect, moreover, how less than nought to us*
*Weighs the long portion of eternal time,*
*Fled ere our birth: so, too, the future weighs,* &c.]

The royal philosopher of Sans Souci has an obvious imitation of this passage of our poet, in his epistle to Marshal Keith, inserted in his Poesies Diverses:

De l'avenir, cher Keith, jugeons par le passé;
Comme avant que je fusse il n'avoit point pensé;
De meme, apres ma mort, quand toutes mes parties
Par la corruption seront anneanties,
Par un meme destin il ne pensera plus!
Non, rien n'est plus certain, soyons-en convaincu.

Just like the past, dear Keith, the future view:
As, ere my being, thought I never knew,
So, after death, when once my limbs shall part,
And gross corruption banquet on my heart,
By the same destiny I think no more.—
No—tis a truism—nought can be so sure.

Ver. 1016. *The tales of hell exist not——*] So, Juvenal:

Esse aliquos Manes, et subterranea regna
Et contum, et Stygio ranas in gurgite nigras,
Atque unâ transire vadum tot millia cymbâ,
Nec pueri credunt, nisi qui nondum ære lavantur.
II. 149.

That angry Justice form'd a dreadful hell,
That ghosts in subterranean regions dwell,
That hateful Styx his muddy current rolls,
And Charon ferries o'er unbodied souls,
Are now as tales, or idle fables priz'd,
By children question'd, and by men despis'd.
Gifford.

Ver. 1016. *The tales of hell exist not in the grave,*
*But here, and curse us living.——*] The poet proceeds to assert, and illustrate, that all the fables of the popular mythology, respecting future punishments, are merely allegorical representations of the effects of vice, and illicit passions, in the present world:

Reflect, moreo'er, how less than nought to us
Weighs the long portion of eternal time
Fled ere our birth: so, too, the future weighs
When death dissolves us. What of horror, then,
Dwells there in death? what gloomy, what austere?
Can there be elsewhere slumber half so sound?
The tales of hell exist not in the grave,
But here, and curse us living. TANTALUS,

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and selects, for this purpose, the well-known instances of Tantalus, Tityus, Sisyphus, and the daughters of Danäus. In this explanation, he has been copied by the Abbé Pellegrin, in the prologue to whose drama of Le Nouveau Monde, Mercury thus addresses Astrea:

De plus affreux transports, des plus noirs fureurs
J'ai trouvé la terre agitée;
Elle est fertile en successeurs
De *Titye* et de *Prometheé*,
Les *Tantales*, les *Ixions*
Ont inondé vote patrie;
Et l'empire de flots a bien moins de furie
Que *le regne des passions*.

Of hideous joys, and furies fell,
Mankind I found the constant sport;
Prometheus, Tityus, seem'd from hell
Their fiercest toils and pangs t' import.
There, many a Tantalus, in vain,
Strives;—while new wheels th' Ixions scourge.
Upbraid, no more, the stormy main—
A direr storm the passions urge.

Ver. 1017. ——TANTALUS,
*With broad, rough rock impending o'er his head,*]
According to the mythology of the Greeks, Tantalus was a son of Jupiter, by the nymph Plote; he was also king of Phrygia, and grandfather of Agamemnon and Menelaus. It is fabulously reported of him, that, on some signal occasion, he invited the gods to an entertainment; and, to prove their pretensions to divinity, had his own son Pelops sacrificed, and served up in a dish at the table. We are told, also, that all the deities, excepting Ceres, were conscious of the barbarity committed, and immediately sentenced him to everlasting punishment in hell. The nature of this punishment is differently related: the more general fable asserts, that he was placed in the river Eridanus, with his head alone raised above the water, and perpetually tormented with hunger and thirst; both which appetites he was precluded from gratifying, notwithstanding that the tip of his tongue was suffered to touch the water in which he was immersed, and that a large quantity of tempting apples were hung immediately around his head. It is to this fable Horace refers, in the following lines:

Tantalus à labris sitiens fugientia captat
Flumina. Quid rides? mutato nomine, de te
Fabula narratur. Congestis undique saccis
Indormis inhians, et tanquam parcere sacris
Cogeris, aut pictis tanquam gaudere tabellis.
SAT. i. 1.

In a full flood stands Tantalus,—his skin
Wash'd o'er in vain; for ever dry within:
He catches at the stream with greedy lips;
From his touch'd mouth the wanton torrent slips.
You laugh? yet, change the name, the fable is thy story;
Thou in a flood of useless wealth dost glory;

Nec miser inpendens magnum timet, aëre, saxum
Tantalus, ut fama est, cassâ formidine torpens;
Sed magis in vitâ divôm metus urguet inanis
Mortaleis; casumque timent, quem quoique ferat fors.
Nec Tityon volucres ineunt, Acherunte jacentem;
Nec, quid sub magno scrutentur pectore, quidquam
Perpetuam ætatem possunt reperire profecto,
Quam lubet inmani projectu corporis exstet:
Qui non sola novem disparsis jugera membris
Obtineat, sed qui terraï totius orbem,
Non tamen æternum poterit perferre dolorem;
Nec præbere cibum proprio de corpore semper.
Sed Tityos nobis hicc' est, in amore jacentem
Quem volucres lacerant, atque exest anxius angor:

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Which thou canst only touch, but never taste
Th' abundance still, and still the want does last.
COWLEY.

But Lucretius supposes a different punishment, and deduces, in some degree, a different moral: he represents him as placed in the infernal regions with a large rock impending over his head, the dread of whose fall for ever terrifies him. In this delineation he is supported by many of the Greek poets, particularly Euripides, in his Orestes, and Pindar, in the following passage:

——κορυφὰ δ' ἐλεν
Ἀταν ὑπεροπλον
Ταν ἰς πατηρ ὑπερκρεμα-
σε, καρτερον αὐτῳ λιθον,
Τον αἰεὶ μενοινων κεφαλας βαλειν,
Ευφροσυνας αλαται.
OD. Olymp. i. 92.

A ponderous stone the sire of all
Hung, tott'ring, o'er the caitiff's head;
The stone for ever seem'd to fall,
And fill'd his joyless heart with dread.

Ver. 1022. *Nor* TITYUS *there exists, the prey of birds.*] Tityus was, likewise, according, to the popular mythology, a son of Jupiter by Elara, daughter of Orchomenus. He attempted to force Latona, the mother of Apollo by Jupiter, to his libidinous desires: for which he was sentenced to the punishment our poet adverts to in this passage, and which Homer has given more fully in the following:

Και Τιτυον ειδον, γαιης ερικοδεος υἱον,
Κειμενον εν δαπεδῳ· ὁ δ' ἐπ' εννεα κειτο πελεθρα·
Τυπτε δε μιν ἑκατερθε παρημενω, ηπαρ ἐκειρον,
Δερτρον ἐσω δονεοντες, &c. ODYS. A. 578.

There, Tityus, large and long, in fetters bound,
O'erspreads nine acres of infernal ground;
Two ravenous vultures, furious for their food,
Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,

With broad, rough rock impending o'er his head,
And craz'd with terror, there is never seen:
But terror dwells with mortals—fate they fear,
And fortune, and a host of fancied gods.
Nor Tityus there exists, the prey of birds.
Nor, though he did, could these the victim's breast
Consume for ever; e'en though his wide bulk,
Not thrice three acres merely might extend,
But cover the vast globe; nor could he bear
Eternal pain, nor yield perpetual food.
But he is Tityus, and by vultures torn,
Whose anxious breast the rage of love devours;

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Incessant gore the liver in his breast,
Th' immortal liver grows, and gives th' immortal feast.
For, as o'er Panope's enamell'd plains
Latona journey'd to the Phthian fanes,
With haughty love th' audacious monster strove
To force the goddess, and to rival Jove. Pope.

Macrobius conceives this celebrated fable to prefigure a different affection of the mind from that offered by Lucretius; and to refer to the everlasting stings of a guilty conscience, preying, without interruption, upon the bosoms of the wicked, Som. Scip. i. 10, while Lope de Vega transfers to Tantalus the allusion which Lucretius finds in Tityus. The verses of the Spanish poet, upon this subject, are beautiful, and well worth inserting and translating. They occur in the Hermosura de Angelica:

Querer y non deçirlo, arder y elarse,
Y, elandose, en el fuego consumirse,
Mirar con sed el agua, y refrenarse;
Acometer el bien, y arrepentirse;
Aver de ser el mal, y dilatarse,
Tener la possession, y despedirse,
Es la pena de *Tantalo*, que luego
Que mira amor, no lo es, que amor es ciego.
Cant. xvi.

To wish, yet ne'er divulge—to burn, yet freeze;
And e'en, while freezing, to consume with fire;
To view the brook athirst, yet never seize;
To aim at bliss, and then repent in ire;
To tread o'er ills still lengthening at the touch,
To grasp delights that all possession spurn—
Such is the fate of Tantalus—and such
To love the fair, that loves not in return.

Ver. 1029. *Whose anxious breast the rage of love devours;*] Thus Gray, in his Ode on Eton College:

Aut aliâ quâ vis scindunt turpedine curæ.
Sisyphus in vitâ quoque nobis ante oculos est,
Qui petere a populo fasces, sævasque secures,
Inbibit; et semper victus, tristisque, recedit.
Nam petere inperium, quod inane est, nec datur umquam;
Atque in eo semper durum subferre laborem;
Hocc' est, advorso nixantem trudere monte
Saxum: quod tamen a summo jam vortice rursum
Volvitur, et plani raptim petit æquora campi.

Deinde, animi ingratam naturam pascere semper,
Atque explere bonis rebus, satiareque, numquam;
Quod faciunt nobis annorum tempora, circum
Quom redeunt, fetusque ferunt, variosque lepores;
Nec tamen explemur vitaï fructibus umquam:
Hocc', ut opinor, id est, ævo florente puellas,

---

Or *pining love shall waste their youth*,
Or jealousy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart.

Ver. 1031. *Here, too, is Sisyphus*——] Sisyphus was the son of Æolus, and captain of a horde of banditti, that, for a long time, infested Attica; he was, at length, slain by Theseus, king of Athens. Out of compliment to Theseus, the Greek mythologists feigned that this lawless ruffian, after having been sentenced to hell, was condemned to the perpetual toil of rolling a heavy stone to the summit of a mountain, which instantly tumbled back, and compelled him to renew his labour. The moral, which Lucretius imagines to be concealed under this fable, is precisely the same as that conjectured by Macrobius: "saxum," says he, "ingens volvere inefficacibus, laboriosisque conatibus, vitam terentes, atram silicem lapsuram, semper et cadenti similem, illorum capitibus imminere, qui arduas potestates, et infaustam ambiunt tyrannidem, nunquam sine timore victuri, et cogentes subjectum vulgus odisse, dum metuat, semper sibi videntur exitium, quod merentur excipere. Ubi supr. The version of Lucretius renders a translation unnecessary.

It is well known, that the description of this punishment in Homer exhibits a most masterly hand; and that its version by Pope is altogether worthy of the original. My readers will not, therefore, be displeased to find the parallel passage of the Grecian

Or aught of passion equal in its force.
  Here, too, is Sisyphus—the man who pants
For public honours, and the giddy crowd
Caresses ever, ever but in vain.
For thus to toil for power, itself at best
A bubble, and that bubble ne'er to boast,
Yet still toil on—is doubtless to roll back,
Up the high hill, the huge, stern, struggling stone;
That which, the steep peak once urg'd up, rebounds
Rapid, resistless, all over the plain.
  Then, too, to feed th' ungrateful mind, and fill
With every good, while still it craves for more,
(As feed mankind the seasons in their turn,
With fruits, and endless beauties, while themselves
Still riot on, and never have enough,)
This, or I err, the fable well unfolds,

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bard inserted in this place for a comparison. It is well observed by Mr. Wakefield, that Lucretius, with a view of rivalling him, has exerted his utmost efforts, and poured forth all the powers of diction, and all the artifice of pause and numbers. Nor have his exertions been void of success. To re-quote him is useless: his description extends in the text from ver. 1008, to v. 1015.

The similar picture in Homer, is as follows:

Και μην Σισιφον εισειδον, κρατερ' αλγε' εχοντα,
Λααν βαρταζοντα πελωριον αμφοτερηισιν·
Η τοι ὁ μεν, σκηριπτομενος χερσι τε ποσι τε,
Δααν ανω ωθεσκε ποτι λοφον· αλλ' ὁτε μελλοι
Ακρον ὑπερβαλεειν, τοτ' αποστρεψασκε κραταιις
Αυτις· επειτα πεδονδε κυλινδετο λαας αναιδης.

Od. B. 594.

The rapidity of the last line in Homer scarcely surpasses that of Lucretius, and the difficulty of the toil expressed in the antecedent verse, not much. Lucretius has adopted precisely the sudden pause of Homer, prior to the change of the numbers. As to the translation of Pope, I by no means aspire to equal it: it becomes me, however, to insert it, although, undoubtedly, to my own disadvantage:

I turn'd my eye, and, as I turn'd, survey'd
A mournful vision! the Sisyphian shade;
With many a weary step, and many a groan,
Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone;
The huge round stone, resulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the ground.

Quod memorant, laticem pertusum congerere in vas;
Quod tamen expleri nullâ ratione potestur.

Ver. 1045. *This, or I err, the fable well unfolds,*

*Feign'd of the damsels,* &c.——] It is reported, in fabulous history, that Danäus, king of the Argives, had fifty daughters, who were married to the fifty sons of Ægysthus, the brother of Danäus; and that forty-nine out of these fifty sisters, for Hypermnestra could not be prevailed upon to unite in the plot, acceded to the barbarous proposal of their father, and massacred their husbands on the bridal night. Popular mythology represents them as sentenced, in consequence of so inhuman a crime, to the dreadful abodes of hell; and condemned to toil for ever, in filling a leaky vessel with water, which escaped as fast as it could be poured in.

This fable is stated, by the Bryantine hypothesis, to be of Chaldean or Egyptian origin; and to refer to the arkite worship propagated over Greece by some of the wandering Cushite colonies, after their desertion of the plain of Shinar, or the valley of Goshen. I have formerly observed, see note on Book II. v. 1167, that Mr. Bryant conjectured Danäus, literally, Da-Naus, "the ark or ship," to have been the same person with Noah,—the machine he had constructed, being called, as is customary even in modern days, after his own name. In consequence of which, from Noah or Näus, which is the same word with a Greek termination, is derived an appellation for every similar vessel in most of the languages of Europe. Thus, in Greek, Ναυς; Latin, Navis; French, Navire; Spanish and Portuguese, Navió; Italian, Navigio.

But Danäus, it seems, was the brother of Ægystheus, which, upon the same system, is Ai-C-Es-Theus, and, with the common Ionic contraction, Ai-C'-Es-Theus, "the place of the temple of the glorious Theus." Theus, or Thoth, however, as I have already observed in the above note, was an appellation, among the Chaldeans, for the Creator, or deity supremely adored; and when the idolatrous descendants of Ham first transferred the worship of the true God to the Sun, the Serpent, the Ark, and the builder of the Ark, Noah was also denominated Theuth, Xuth, or Zuth, whence both Ζευς and Θεος; whence, also, Διος and Deus, and many other parallel terms both in ancient and modern languages. See note as above on Book II. v. 1167.

The *affinity* here specified, therefore, as subsisting between Danäus and Ægysthus, and fabulously denominated a *brother-hood*, is easily accounted for, by conceiving the two terms to refer to an hypothesis of Noah, and the Temple or hierarchy instituted to his honour. If this be admitted, it is easy to conceive, that the fifty sons and the fifty daughters were so many priests and priestesses employed in the idolatrous worship. And the marriage and barbarous plot here stated to have ensued, may refer to some fresh vow, mutually entered into, of additional superstition, together with the sudden breach of that vow, on the part of many of the votaries, as soon as it had been consummated, and their desertion to the worship of the Sun, the Serpent, or some other deity. The name of Hypermnestra, the only female who refused to comply with the dishonest proposal of the sisterhood is almost literally, Hyp-Ur-Menes-Tar-A, and, with a Doric contraction, Hyp-Ur-M'nes-T'r-A: once more signifying, as though conferred distinctively upon herself, in consequence of her peculiar fidelity, "the place of the ark of the profound and illustrious Noah." On the the word Hyp, (𓇋𓊪 among the Egyptians,) I have already commented in note on Book II. v. 1167, and have there shewn, that it was the express and direct term for a boat, barge, or ship; and the word by which the ark of Noah, or Thoth, was described when these names were not figuratively selected for the purpose. And it is curious to observe, that almost every European language, which has not derived its appellation for a water-carriage from the Chaldean term Noah, has been indebted to this additional radical. Hence the Greek Ιππος applied, first of all, to ships and water-carriages, which were beautifully and poetically denominated horses of Neptune, and afterwards transferred to horses of

Feign'd of the damsels doom'd, in flow'r of youth,
To fill for ever the still leaking urn.

every species: hence the Saxon, ϸcip; the German, schiff; the Dutch, schippen; and our own English term ship, differing from the Egyptian alone by the prefix of a single letter. Hence too, at the present day, the Coptics apply the same word ϩιπ to the Ibis, which is an aquatic fowl of the crane kind: and hence, probably, the Ethiopic ሃይቦ (Hybo) "copious dew;"—water, the immediate element of the Hyp, Ship, or Ibis.

The next term, of which the name Hypermnestra, Hyp-Ur-M'ns-T'r-A, is compounded, is Ur. But Ur or Or, upon the theory now referred to, is the Sun, or God of fire;—it forms the radical of the Egyptian Orus, and constitutes a part of the Greek nouns, Hercules and Phrygia. The proposed etymology of the word Menes, I have already remarked upon in the note above referred to, Book II. v. 1167; and observed that, from various traditions and authors, it is conceived to be only an additional name for Noah, or whatever other deity was worshiped as the First Parent of all things; whence, obviously, Manes, Minos, Meon, Menu, Moon, Μην, Mahēēna, (the same as Μην and Moon,) in the Friendly Isles of the Pacific Ocean, which, both from language and religious rites, are plausibly supposed, by modern authors, to have been peopled from the descendants of Chus.

The term Tar, implies dark, deep, or mysterious. Hence Tartarus, which is only a reduplication of the same word, so as to bestow on it a superlative signification, and imply something extremely dark, extremely deep, or mysterious: and hence again ταρσος (tarsus) "the foot," being the deepest, or lowest part of the body. Thus, also, the Hebrew תרגום ("Targum,") "interpretation," rendered conversely, and of course the opposite to mystery. The word *a* with which this compound terminates, is of similar import with Ai in the foregoing Ai- C'-Es-Theus (Ægystheus) and refers to place, or situation.

The punishment to which these faithless damsels were doomed, is supposed to prove that the entire fable, is of Arkite and Egyptian origin. In commemoration of the deliverance of the great father of the human race from the flood, (whether under the name of Thoth, Danaüs, Menes, or Osiris, which last was another appellation bestowed upon him,) the Egyptians are known to have instituted a peculiar religious rite, which consisted in the procession of a consecrated ark or vessel, carried in triumph through the streets, as a token of the safe debarkation of the patriarch. Upon this ceremony, Plutarch expressly informs us, de Isid. et Osyrid. that, "on the nineteenth of the month Choiac (corresponding with the sixteenth of our December), they descend into the sea, and the keepers of the robes, together with the priests, take out the consecrated chest, which contains within itself *a little ark of gold*, χρυσουν κιβωτιον, into which they pour clean water, and proclaim by a shout, from all the multitude present, that Osiris is safe." The filling the ark with water was designed, most probably, to designate that it was sound, and free from leaking: and the punishment fabulously bestowed upon these unfaithful priestesses, to typify, in the first place, the breaches they had committed upon it, and, secondly, to bestow upon them a reward due to their infidelity. It is obvious, from this sketch, that most of the preceding fables are, in like manner, referable to a Babylonian or Egyptian origin. But it would protract the present commentary to an insufferable length, and be wandering too far from its main design, to pursue this subject any further.

Ver. 1046. —*the damsels doom'd, in flow'r of youth,*] "Ævo florente puellas." This elegant metaphor of Lucretius has been so often copied into every language as to become completely nationalized in all. Virgil himself has not been inattentive to it:

Ante urbem pueri et *primævo flore juventus*
Exercentur equis. Æn. vii. 162.

The panting youth, *in all their vernal flower*,
Essayed their coursers.

Ennius, however, precedes Lucretius in a verse to the same effect, which has been highly extolled by Cicero. It relates to Cethegus:

Cerberus, et Furiæ, jam vero, et lucis egestas,
Tartarus, horriferos eructans faucibus æstus;
Quei neque sunt usquam, nec possunt esse, profecto:
Sed metus in vitâ pœnarum pro male factis
Est insignibus insignis; scelerisque luela
Carcer, et horribilis de saxo jactus eorum,
Verbera, carnufices, robur, pix, lamina, tædæ:
Quæ tamen et si absunt, at mens, sibi conscia factis,
Præmetuens, adhibet stimulos, torretque flagellis:
Nec videt interea, qui terminus esse malorum
Possit, quive siet pœnarum denique finis:
Atque eadem metuit magis, hæc ne in morte gravescant.

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*Flos inlibatus populi,* suadæque medulla

The people's choicest *flower*, persuasion's pith.

So Dryden, in our own language, in his Alexander's Feast:

Lovely Thaïs, at his side,
Sat like a blooming eastern bride
In *flower of youth*, and beauty's pride.

Buchanan has culled, and introduced the same metaphor into his Jephthes. It forms a part of his description of Iphis, the Iphigenia of the sacred writings:

Florem juventæ deflet ille, et siderum
Similes ocellos.—

These, her sweet flower of youth deplor'd, her eyes
Radiant as stars.

With this explanation, the following passage in Nahum will receive additional beauty, and prove, at the same time, that the poetry of the Hebrews was not insensible to the value of this metaphor: ch. i. 4.

He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry;
And drieth up all the rivers.
Bashan languisheth, and Carmel:
Yea—*the flower of Lebanon languisheth.*

Ver. 1048. *The* Furies, Cerberus, *and* Hell *itself*
*Of light devoid, and belching from its jaws*
*Tremendous fires, live not, nor can they live:*]

There is more unnecessary paraphrase in the corresponding passage in Marchetti, than I have observed in any other part of his version:

Cerbero, *fiera orribile e diversa*
*Che latra con tre gole*, e il cieco Tartaro
Che fumo erutta e spaventosi incendj,
E le furie *crinite di serpenti*,
*Ed Eaco e Minosse, e Radamanto*
Non sono in alcun luogo, &c.

There is not a syllable in the original to warrant the introduction of any part of the above passage marked in Italics.

Ver. 1048. ——Hell *itself*
*Of light devoid, and belching from its jaws*
*Tremendous fires,*——] Thus Milton, evidently derived from Lucretius:

The Furies, Cerberus, and Hell itself
Of light devoid, and belching from its jaws
Tremendous fires, live not, nor can they live:
But well they paint the dread of justice here
For crimes atrocious, the reward of guilt,
The scourge, the wheel, the block, the dungeon deep,
The base-born hangman, the Tarpeian cliff;
Which, though the villain 'scape, his conscious soul
Still fears perpetual, tort'ring all his days,
And still foreboding heavier pangs at death.

---

The seat of Desolation, *void of light*,
Save what the glimmering of *these livid flames*
Casts pale and dreadful.

Par. Lost, i. 181.

The following description of Gesner will not appear contemptible, and it may be amusing to have an opportunity of comparing it: "Der fürchterliche wiederschein, den jenseit der gebürge emporwallende flammen in die wolken hinstreuten, goss braune dämmrung auf das schwarze dunkel." "The fearful reflexion which the flickering flames on the opposite side of the hill scattered through the clouds, gave a *dun twilight to the black darkness*."

Death of Abel, Book III.

Ver. 1051. *But well they paint the dread of justice here*
*For crimes atrocious, the reward of guilt*, &c.] Cicero has an admirable passage, in one of his orations, to the same effect: Nolite putare, quemadmodum in fabulis, eos qui aliquid impie, sceleratéque commiserunt, agitari, et perterreri furiarum tædis ardentibus: sua quemque fraus, suus terror maxime vexat, suum quemque scelus agitat, amentiaque afficit, suæ malæ cogitationes conscientiaque animi terrent. Hæ sunt impiis assiduæ domesticæque furiæ, quæ dies noctesque parentum pœnas à conscelera-tissimis filiis repetunt. Pro Ros. Amer. "Do not imagine, as fabulous history teaches us, that they who have committed any impious or atrocious deed are haunted, and terrified by the flaming torches of the furies: every man's own iniquity, the terror of every one's own mind—these are what principally disturb him; he is haunted and driven mad by his own misdeeds; he is startled by his own conscience, and his own dreadful apprehensions. These are, with the wicked, those perpetual and domestic furies that night and day avenge the sufferings of parents on their flagitious offspring."

Ver. 1055. ——*his conscious soul*
*Still fears perpetual, tort'ring all his days,*
*And still foreboding heavier pangs at death.*] The serenity and quiet of the sleep of death, which

Hinc Acherusia fit stultorum denique vita.
Hocc' etiam tibi tute interdum dicere possis :
" Lumina sis oculis etiam bonus Ancus reliquit ;"
Qui melior multis, quam tu, fuit, inprobe! rebus.

---

our poet has painted with a masterly hand, in ver. 937, he now contrasts with the tumultuous and affrighted life, the horrid and fearful decease of the wicked. Dr. Glynn, to whose poem on the Day of Judgment I have referred once or twice before, as comprising passages that have a strong analogy to the style of Lucretius, and have much intrinsic evidence of being hence deduced, has also conveyed this contrasted idea in very appropriate language, in the following lines :

——horror gnaws the guilty soul
Of dying sinners, while the good man sleeps
Peaceful and calm, and with a smile expires.

Ver. 1058. *Hence earth itself to fools becomes a hell.*] Thus Gesner, in the soliloquy of Cain, after awaking from his dream : zieht er den vorhang weg, und lass mich in die hölle der zukunft hinaus-sehn. " He draws aside the veil, and unfolds to me the *hell* of posterity." Death of Abel, Book IV. The Germans are particularly attached to this bold imagery : but there is a striking and tremendous passage in the *Robbers* of Schiller, so illustrative of this, and the three or four preceding verses, that I cannot avoid adding it. It is a sudden exclamation of Moor, the hero of the drama, in a dialogue between himself and Rasman : " My innocence ! O my innocence!—See how all Nature expands at the sweet breath of spring.—O God ! *that this paradise—this heaven—should be a* HELL *to me!*—When all is happiness—all in the sweet spirit of peace—the world one family—and its father there above, who is not my father.—I alone the outcast—the prodigal son !—Of all the children of his mercy, I alone rejected ! the companion of murderers—of viperous fiends—bound down, enchained to guilt and horror."—So the sublime epic poet of our own nation :

——which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair ?
*Which way I fly is hell—myself am hell.*
PAR. LOST, iv. 73.

Not less terribly descriptive, and equally bold in expression, is the following passage from the book of Job, ch. xviii. 5—17 : in the version of which I have endeavoured to preserve the different personifications of the original :

5 גם אור רשעים ידעך
ולא יגה שביב אישו :
11 סביב בעתהו בלהות
והפצהו לרגליו :
12 יהי רעב אנו
ואיד נכון לצלעו :
13 יאכל בדי עורו
יאכל בדיו בכור מות :
14 ינתק מאהלו מבטחו
ותצעידהו למלך בלהות :
15 תשכון באהלו מבלי לו
יזרה על נוהו גפרית :
16 מתחת שרשיו יבשו
וממעל יכל קצירו :
17 זכרו אבד מני ארץ
ולא שם לו על בני חוץ :

5 Fail shall the light that guides the sinner's way ;
The vital flame that cheers him shall decay :
11 Roam where he may wild TERRORS shall attend,
And haunt his steps, where'er those steps may bend.
12 At him shall ANGUISH, gaunt with hunger, rush,
DISTRESS, with pond'rous gripe, his ribs shall crush :
13 DEATH'S FIRST-BORN PLAGUE shall gnaw him deep within,
Gnaw to the gloss, the summit of his skin.
14 His home SUSPICION shall beset : DISMAY,
Arm'd like a king, lead on the dread affray :

Hence earth itself to fools becomes a hell.
Thus ponder oft, retir'd: Ancus the good,
E'en he has clos'd his eyes on mortal things;
A man, thou coward! worthier far than thou!

---

15 His house, his haunts, his transient tent assail,
And round him *flakes of fiery sulphur* hail.
16 Below, no stream his blasted root shall bathe;
Above, his branches lurid lightnings scathe;
17 Clouds heap'd on clouds his memory shall blot;
His name from earth be banish'd and forgot.

Ver. 1059. ——Ancus *the good,*
*E'en he has clos'd his eyes on mortal things;*] Festus has observed, that the original of this translated verse is drawn, with a trifling alteration, from the poem of Ennius on the Punic war. In Ennius, we read,

Postquam lumina sis oculis bonus Ancus reliquit.

In Lucretius,

Lumina sis oculis etiam bonus Ancus reliquit.

Ver. 1060. *E'en he has clos'd his eyes on mortal things;*
*A man, thou coward! worthier far than thou!*] The whole of this passage is well translated by Dryden:

—When thoughts of death disturb thy head,
Consider Ancus great and good is dead;
Ancus, thy better far, was born to die,
And thou! dost thou bewail mortality?

The Latin of Lucretius is copied from a well-known distich of Homer; and Pope was so delighted with the above lines of Dryden, that he has employed them, with but little variation, in his version of the Greek. In Homer, they occur thus:

Αλλα φιλος, θανε και συ· τιη ολοφυρεαι αυτως;
Κατθανε και Πατροκλος, ὁσπερ σειο πολλον αμεινων.
Il. Υ. 106.

In Pope, as follows:

Die then, my friend! what boots it to deplore?
*The great, the good Patroclus is no more!*
*He, far thy better, was foredoom'd to die,*
*And thou! dost thou bewail mortality?*

Ancus Martius was grandson of Numa, and the fourth of the Roman monarchs. His character is thus described by Livy: Avitæ gloriæ memor: medium erat in eo ingenium, et Numæ et Romuli; cuilibet superiorum regum belli, pacisque et artibus, et gloriâ par. "He forgot not the glory of his ancestors; the powers of his mind were of a description between those of Numa and Romulus; and he was equal to any of our former kings in the glory and arts both of war and peace."

The reader will, I am confident, readily excuse my adding in this note, for a comparison with the above passages of Homer and Lucretius, Ercilla's description of the death of Lautaro. Lautaro was the most heroic, as well as most polished, of the Indian chieftains: and the manly generosity of Ercilla always allows him the praise to which he is entitled:

Por el siniestro lado (o dura suerte!)
Rompe la cruda punta, y tan derecho
Que *passa el coraçon mas bravo y fuerte*
*Que jamas se encerro en humano pecho.*
De tal tiro quedô ufana la muerte,
Viendo de solo un golpe tan gran hecho:
Y usurpando la gloria al homicida
Se attribuye à la muerte esta herida.
Cant. xiv.

Through his left side,—ye valiant, mourn his lot!
Flew the keen arrow, with such fury shot,
*It pierc'd his heart, the bravest and the best*
*That e'er was lodg'd within a human breast.*
Proud of the stroke that laid such valour low,
Death seem'd to glory in th' important blow:
And that no mortal might his triumph claim,
In darkness hid the doubtful archer's name.
Hayley.

Inde alii multei reges, rerumque potentes,
Obciderunt, magnis quei gentibus inperitarunt.
Ille quoque ipse, viam qui quondam per mare magnum
Stravit, iterque dedit legionibus ire per altum,
Ac pedibus salsas docuit superare lacunas,
Et contempsit equis, insultans, murmura ponti;
Lumine adempto, animam moribundo corpore fudit.
Scipiades, belli fulmen, Carthaginis horror,
Ossa dedit terræ, proinde ac famul infimus esset.
Adde repertores doctrinarum, atque leporum:
Adde Heliconiadum comites; quorum unus Homerus,

Ver. 1064. *E'en he who wander'd o'er the mighty main, Led on his legions, and first op'd the way*, &c.] The poet alludes to Xerxes king of Persia, of whom Herodotus narrates that he walked over the sea, and sailed on dry land: alluding to his having thrown an immense bridge over the Hellespont, and dug a channel nearly around the whole of mount Athos, through which a considerable portion of his fleet passed. There is an idle tale related of him by the same historian, that, upon the destruction of his bridge, by a violent tempest, he ordered three hundred lashes to be inflicted on the waves, and that they should be instantly bound with chains. The courtiers of Xerxes, it should seem, had flattered him to more purpose respecting his power over this element, than those of Canute were able to accomplish in later times. Milton has alluded to this anecdote of Xerxes, in his Par. Lost, ix. 306.

So, if great things to small may be compar'd,
Xerxes the liberty of Greece to yoke, &c.

Ver. 1069. Scipio, *the war's dread thunder-bolt, the scourge Of ransack'd* Tyre,——] The poet refers to Publius Cornelius Scipio, who obtained the honourable surname of Africanus from his triumphs over Hannibal. So capricious, however, at all times, was the favour of the Roman people, that this consummate warrior, as well as virtuous man, at length fell into discredit, and was accused by the tribunes of having been bribed by Antiochus to consent to a peace. Scipio thought it unworthy of himself to be in the city during his trial, or personally to stand forwards in his own defence: he retired, therefore, to Liternum in Campania, where he died about the year of Rome 567. The phrase "thunder-bolt of war," *belli fulmen*, has been copied by Virgil, and applied both to himself and his relation of the same name, who afterwards rivalled him so effectually in martial glory and success:

——geminos, duo fulmina belli,
Scipiadas, cladem Libyæ. Æn. vi. 842.

See, both the Scipios, *thunder-bolts of war*,
The double bane of Afric.

Cicero has caught the same metaphor, and has introduced it into his oration for Cornelius Balbus: cum *duo fulmina* nostri imperii Cnæius et Publius Scipiones

Thousands, moreo'er, like him of crowns possest,
Have fall'n like him, and all their pomp resign'd.
E'en he who wander'd o'er the mighty main,
Led on his legions, and first op'd the way
To tread on foot th' unfathom'd gulphs below,
He who thus brav'd the billows, and the storms,
Has clos'd his eye-lids, and his soul resign'd.—
Scipio, the war's dread thunder-bolt, the scourge
Of ransack'd Tyre, sleeps, like the slave, inhum'd.
Add, too, the founders of the graceful arts,
And schools erudite;—add th' immortal bards;
Add Homer's self the muses' realm who rules;

---

subito in Hispania extincti occidissent. "When the two thunder-bolts of our government, Cn. and P. Scipio, suddenly died in Spain."

Hence Voltaire, in his description of Henry the Great, on his abrupt landing in France, after his visit to England, by which he fortunately joins his troops, at the moment of their retreat:

Brillant comme *l'eclair* au fort de la tempete,
Il vole aux premiers rangs, il s'avance à leur tete;
Il combat, on le suit, il change les destins,
*La foudre* est dans ses yeux, la mort est dans ses mains. Henriade, ch. iv.

The reader may accept the following version:

Fierce as the *thunder-bolt* through tempests speeds,
He flies, he joins them, and the foremost leads;
He fights, inspires, the power of fate commands,
*Lightning* his eyes, and havoc in his hands.

Mr. Mickle has introduced something of the same image into his translation of the Lusiad:

Whose *spear's dread lightning* o'er th' embattled plain
Has oft o'erwhelm'd the Moors. Book v.

The merit of this simile, however, is all his own; for it does not occur in the Portugueze, which is as follows:

——qui os Espanhoes tanto ajudou
A fazerem nos Mouros bravo estrago.

Ver. 1073. *Add* Homer's *self the muses' realm who rules;*] In the original, "Homerus sceptra potitus:" which Creech has thus pretended to translate:

Homer, their prince, that darling of the nine—
*What Troy would at a second fall repine*
*To be thus sung*—is nothing now but fame.

Such a paraphrastic rendering can scarcely be called a version: there is not a syllable of authority in Lucretius for the conceit expressed in the above verses in italics; and it would certainly have been unworthy of his judgment. Manilius has applauded this first and chief of bards in the opening of his second book, in a style that Lucretius might not have disdained; and the translation of this passage, which I shall subjoin, and which is also from Creech, does credit to his powers of metrical version:

Sceptra potitus, eâdem aliis sopitus quiete est.
Denique, Democritum, post quam matura vetustas
Admonuit memores motus languescere mentis,
Sponte suâ leto caput obvius obtulit ipse.
Ipse Epicurus obiit, decurso lumine vitæ;
Qui genus humanum ingenio superavit, et omneis
Restinxit, stellas exortus uti aërius sol.

Tu vero dubitabis, et indignabere, obire,
Mortua quoi vita est prope jam vivo, atque videnti?

---

——cujus ex ore profusos
Omnis posteritas latices in carmina duxit,
Amnemque in tenueis ausa est deducere rivos
Unius fæcunda bonis.

——from whose abundant spring
Succeeding poets draw the songs they sing;
From him they take, from him adorn their themes,
And into little channels cut his streams,
Rich in his store.

Vida has copied this passage as follows:

Quos inter potitur sceptris insignis Homerus:
Hunc omnes alii observant, hinc pectore numen
Concipiunt vates, blandumque Heliconis amorem.
Poetic. i. 135.

Nor is it hard to cull each noble piece,
And point out every glorious son of Greece;
Above whose numbers *Homer sits on high*,
And shines *supreme in* distant *majesty*;
Whom with a reverent eye the rest regard,
And owe their raptures to *the sovereign bard*.
Pitt.

Ver. 1075. *When hoary hairs* Democritus *fore-warn'd*] See some account of the termination of the life of this philosopher, in note on verse 380 of this book.

Ver. 1078. *E'en he is fall'n, his lamp of life extinct,*
*Th' illustrious* Epicurus,——] Much of the history of this unrivalled sage will be found in the life of Lucretius, prefixed to the first volume of this work; as also in note on Book I. v. 65.

Ver. 1079. ——*whose vast mind*
*Triumphant rose o'er all men, and excell'd*
*As, in the heavens, the sun excells the stars.*] From this passage, we again trace the brave and generous Ercilla enriching his Araucana, by infusing its spirit and simile into his delineation of the heavenly vision that, in a female form, appeared to console and fortify the affrighted Spaniards after the Indian dæmon Eponamon had vanished away. The poet tells us that she was

Cubierta de un hermoso y limpio velo,
Con tanto resplendor, que al medio dia
*La claridad del sol delante della,*
*Es la que cerca del tiene una estrella.* Cant. ix.

Clad in the radiance of so rich a veil,
As made the sun's meridian lustre pale.
For it outshone his golden orb as far
*As his full blaze outshines the twinkling star.*
Hayley.

Camoens, in a passage of equal beauty, and where the same simile occurs, has totally reversed the ef-

These all, like meaner mortals, rest in peace.——
When hoary hairs Democritus forewarn'd
His mental powers were hastening to decay,
Quick he uprose, and midway met his fate.—
E'en he is fall'n, his lamp of life extinct,
Th' illustrious Epicurus, whose vast mind
Triumphant rose o'er all men, and excell'd,
As, in the heavens, the sun excels the stars.
And dost thou murmur, and, indignant, die,
Whose life, while living, scarcely death exceeds?

---

fect, and the reader may be pleased by an opportunity of comparing the Portugueze bard, both with the Roman and the Spanish. Venus is advancing through the cerulean vault of heaven to the throne of Jupiter:

E como hia a frontada do caminho,
Tam fermosa no gesto se mostrava,
Que as *estrellas*, o ceo, e o ar vezinho,
E tudo quanto a via namorava.
Dos olhos onde faz seu filho o ninho
Huns espiritos vivos inspirava,
Com que os polos gelados acendia,
E tornava do fogo a esfera fria.

Lusiad, Cant. ii.

Her radiant eyes such living splendours cast,
The *sparkling stars were brightened* as she past;
The frozen pole with sudden streamlets flow'd,
And as the burning zone with fervour glow'd.

This version is from the muse of Mr. Mickle: but the Portugueze reader will see at once, that although it has considerable merit so far as it goes, by omitting much of the picture contained in the original, it falls very far below it in general worth. Milton has an image somewhat similar to this of Lucretius, and perhaps, immediately derived from him, in the following passage, in which he describes Lucifer as

——*brighter once amidst the host*
*Of Angels*, than that *star* (Lucifer) *the stars among*.

Par. Lost, vii. 132.

The parallelism of idea in the following verses, from an ancient song in Percy's collection, is very peculiar. It is entitled, from its opening, "You meaner beauties."

You meaner beauties of the night,
Which poorly satisfy our eyes,
More by your number than your light,
Like *common people of the skies*—
What are ye *when the moon doth rise*?

So when my mistris shall be seen
In sweetnesse of her looks and minde;
By vertue first, then choice a queen;
Tell me if she was not designde
*Th' eclipse, and glory* of her kinde? B. i. 281.

The adoption of *the moon* for *the sun*, in the former of these stanzas, is synonymous with the same imitation of our poet, as it occurs in Horace:

——Micat inter omnes
Julium sidus, velut *inter ignes*
*Luna minores*.

Lib. i. Od. 12.

With night's least lamps the *moon* compare:—
Such 'mid the stars the Julian star.

Qui somno partem majorem conteris ævi;
Et vigilans stertis, nec somnia cernere cessas,
Solicitamque geris cassâ formidine mentem;
Nec reperire potes, quid sit tibi sæpe mali, quom
Ebrius urgueris multis miser undique curis,
Atque, animo incerto fluitans, errore vagaris?
Si possent homines, proinde ac sentire videntur
Pondus inesse animo, quod se gravitate fatiget,
E quibus id fiat caussis quoque noscere, et unde
Tanta mali tamquam moles in pectore constet;
Haud ita vitam agerent, ut nunc plerumque videmus:
Quid sibi quisque velit, nescire, et quærere semper:
Conmutare locum, quasi onus deponere possit.

Exit sæpe foras magnis ex ædibus ille,
Esse domi quem pertæsum est, subitoque reventat;
Quippe foris nihilo melius qui sentiat esse.

---

Ver. 1083. *Whose life, while living, scarcely death exceeds?*] Thus Cicero, in Somn. Scip. 3. vestra vero quæ dicitur *vita mors* est: "this *life* of yours, as you call it, is nothing more than *death*." Mr. Wakefield has, with his usual acumen, pointed out a parallel passage in the sacred Scriptures. 1 Tim. v. 6. "But she that liveth in pleasure, is *dead while she liveth*."

It is to such, the honest-hearted, but sarcastic Cowper alludes in the following verses of his Task:

Yet e'en these
Themselves, love life, and cling to it, as he
That overhangs a torrent, to a twig.
They love it, and yet loath it; fear to die,
Yet scorn the purposes for which they live.
Book I.

Ver. 1098. *This, from mere listlessness, his mansion flies;*
*Straight he returns; 'tis listless all abroad.*]
Thus Ennius, in a fragment of his Iphigenia:

Imus huc, hinc illinc: quum illuc ventum est, ire illinc lubet:
Incerte errat animus; præter propter vitam vivitur.

Thou! who in sleep devourest half thy days?
And, e'en awake, who snorest, dreaming still,
And tort'ring all thy mind with vain alarms?
Thou! who lamentest, oft, unknowing why,
Urg'd on, with fear intoxicated deep,
And in a maze of mental errors lost?
Did men but think, and oft to think they seem,
That from themselves their heaviest sorrows rise,
And knew they too whence thus themselves create
These bosom suff'rings—seldom should we see
Life spent as now each passing hour pourtrays.
All pant perpetual for they know not what,
Nor learn by searching—changing their abodes,
As though the change would leave their load behind.
This, from mere listlessness, his mansion flies;
Straight he returns;—'tis listless all abroad.
That to his villa posts, with rapid wheels,

---

Here, there, we rush, there, here, with ceaseless strife;
And, fond of living, overshoot all life.

With this, too, may be advantageously compared the following passage of Euripides:

Δευρο γαρ ελθων, παν επος ην σοι·
Ταχα δ' ες Θαλαμους σπευσεις το παλιν·
Ταχυ γαρ σφαλλη, κουδεις χαιρεις.
Ουδε σ' αρεσκει το παρον, το δ' απον
Φιλτερον ηγη. HIPPOL. 182.

Thy talk
Was all of coming hither; but in haste,
Back to thy chamber, soon wilt thou return;
For thou, each moment altering, tak'st delight
In nothing long; the present quickly grows
Unpleasing, somewhat absent thou esteem'st
More grateful. WOODHALL.

In the same manner Plautus, as Lambinus has before observed:

Sumne ego homo miser, qui nusquam bene quee quiescere?
Si domi sum, foris est animus; sin foris sum, animus domi est.
MERCAT. III. iv. 1.

Am not I then that wretch who ne'er can rest?
At home, abroad; abroad, still homewards press'd

Currit, agens mannos, ad villam præcipitanter,
Auxilium tectis quasi ferre ardentibus instans:
Oscitat ex templo, tetigit quom limina villæ;
Aut abit in somnum gravis, atque oblivia quærit:
Aut etiam properans urbem petit, atque revisit.

Hoc se quisque modo fugit: at, quem scilicet, ut fit,
Ecfugere haud potis est, ingratiis hæret, et obit;
Propterea, morbi quia caussam non tenet æger:
Quam bene si videat, jam rebus quisque relictis
Naturam primum studeat cognoscere rerum;
Temporis æterni quoniam, non unius horæ,

---

Ver. 1100. *That to his villa posts, with rapid wheels, As though the building were in flames, and call'd His instant aid.*——] Creech has totally mistaken the meaning of his author in this passage, and, therefore, instead of sending the restless mortal, whom Lucretius describes, into the country, to extinguish the flames of his villa on fire, he represents him as flying away from his *father*'s house in town, for the sole reason, that it was on fire: nor does the term *father* occur in the original:

Others, with full as eager haste, retire,
As if their father's house were all on fire,
To their small farm.

Ver. 1102. ——*No sooner treads his foot The sounding hall, than, on the sofa thrown,*] The luxury of the Romans did not equal, at the time of Lucretius, that which was evinced a century afterwards; but it may be questioned, whether it did not even then equal that of the present day in any part of modern Europe. With more than Oriental indulgence, they partook of all their principal meals in a recumbent position; and, although the poet has not made mention of the couch, or reposing seat on which they then lay at ease, the fact of yawning, indulging sleep, and seeking oblivion, obviously proves that he refers to it. And I know of no better word by which to express this luxurious contrivance, than the modern term sofa, which it very much resembled; not immediately, perhaps, in its form, but in its use and powers; for the guest that reclined on a dining couch that admitted but himself alone, lay always at full length, supporting his head or the upper part of his body, with his left hand; and where this couch was large enough to admit of more than one person, an abundance of pillows were supplied to administer to the ease of each. Like the modern sofa, moreover, the dining couch of the Romans was lined and covered with the softest, and most ornamental stuffs or silks. Virgil has given us a rich and appropriate description of this species of furniture of the Roman dining room, in his account of the first feast prepared by Dido for Æneas and his suite, which he represents after the Roman costume:

As though the building were in flames, and call'd
His instant aid.—No sooner treads his foot
The sounding hall, than, on the sofa thrown,
He yawns disgusted—or indulges sleep,
And seeks oblivion; or, perchance, he starts,
And tow'rds the town drives back with equal speed.
Thus each his self would fly, that self which still
Haunts every step, and every pain creates,
Heedless of what torments him: which if clear
The wand'rer trac'd, his restless soul, at once
The world forsaking, and the world's vain boasts,
Would scan THE NATURE OF CREATED THINGS.
For little weighs the passing hour of time

---

——aulæis jam se regina superbis
Aureâ composuit spondâ, mediamque locavit.
Jam pater Æneas, et jam Trojana juventus,
Conveniunt, stratoque super discumbitur ostro.

Now, op'd the splendid halls, the queen assumes
The couch that decks the midmost of the rooms:
Gold was its frame; Æneas and his train,
On couches round, their different posts sustain.

With this characteristic delineation of Lucretius, may be compared the following passage in the Minstrel:

Canst thou forego the pure etherial soul,
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of luxury to loll;
Stung with disease, and stupefied with spleen? &c.
Book I. Ch. 8.

Ver. 1112. *Would scan* THE NATURE OF CREATED THINGS.]

Thus Virgil, in terms not very different:

Fælix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.
Georg. ii. 490.

Happy the man, THE CAUSES who discerns
OF THINGS CREATED.

That is, as Wakefield justly interprets it, who is versed in natural philosophy: and to this effect, indeed, wrote Epicurus himself, in the following passage preserved by Diogenes Laertius, x. 143. Ουκ ην των φοβουμενον λυειν υπερ των κυριωτατων, μη κατειδοτα τι, ἡ του συμπαντος φυσις, αλλ' υποπτευομενον τι των κατα τους μυθους· ὡς τε ουκ ην, ανευ φυσιολογιας, ακεραιας τας ἡδονας απολαμβανειν. The text renders the version needless.

Ver. 1113. *For little weighs the passing hour of time*
*When with eternity compar'd, that state*
*Which, after death, to mortals yet remains.*]

"Time, how short, eternity, how long!" is an exclamation which may be adopted with equal propriety by the Epicurean and the Christian moralist. The few fleeting hours that comprize the life of man upon earth, must, in the estimation of both, weigh as *the small dust of the balance*, when compared with that eternity to which we are all hastening. Though,

Ambigitur status, in quo sit mortalibus omnis
Ætas post mortem, quæ restat quomque, manendo.
Denique, tanto opere in dubiis trepidare periclis
Quæ mala nos subigit vitaï tanta cupido?
Certe equidem finis vitæ mortalibus adstat,
Nec devitari letum pote, quin obeamus.
Præterea, vorsamur ibeidem, atque insumus, usque;
Nec nova vivendo procuditur ulla voluptas:
Sed, dum abest, quod avemus, id exsuperare videtur
Cætera; post aliud, quom contigit illud, avemus;
Et sitis æqua tenet vitaï, semper hianteis:
Posteraque, in dubio est, fortunam quam vehat ætas;
Quidve ferat nobis casus, quive exitus instet.

Nec prorsum, vitam ducundo, demimus hilum
Tempore de mortis; nec delibrare valemus,
Quo minus esse diu possimus morte peremptei.
Proinde, licet quot vis vivendo condere secla,
Mors æterna tamen nihilo minus illa manebit:

---

doubtless, the position of our poet may be doubly appropriated by the Christian who regards eternity as a state of actual being, in comparison with the Epicurean, who could only contemplate it as a state of absolute nihility.

Ver. 1116. *Through what vast woes this wild desire of life*
*Drives us, afraid! what dangers, and what toils!*
*Yet death still hastens, nor can mortal man,*
*With all his efforts, turn th' unerring shaft.*]

Τις δε εξ ὑμων μεριμνων δυναται προσθειναι επι την ΗΛΙΚΙΑΝ αυτου πηχυν ενα. "Which of you, by anxiety, can add one cubit to his existence?" Matth. c. vi. 27. It is impossible for the Christian, while perusing this very just and beautiful reasoning of Lucretius, not to be reminded of the reasoning employed on the same subject in this, and the following verses of St. Matthew; and, truly admirable as is the former, not to be struck with the superior force and sublimity of the latter; a force

When with eternity compar'd, that state
Which, after death, to mortals yet remains.
  Through what vast woes this wild desire of life
Drives us, afraid! what dangers, and what toils!
Yet death still hastens, nor can mortal man,
With all his efforts, turn th' unerring shaft.
  Life, through its circuit too, is still the same,
Nor can it boast one source of new delight.
The bliss we covet seems, at distant view,
To all superior; but, when once possest,
It cloys, we spurn it, and another call.
Yet the same thirst of life corrodes us still,
Though doubtful of to-morrow, and the fate
To-morrow brings—our blessing, or our curse.
  E'en could we life elongate, we should ne'er
Subtract one moment from the reign of death,
Nor the deep slumber of the grave curtail.
O'er ages could we triumph—death alike
Remains eternal—nor of shorter date

---

and sublimity indeed as far excelling it, as the revealed religion of the last exceeds the natural wisdom of the first.

Ver. 1122. *The bliss we covet seems, at distant view,*
*To all superior; but, when once possest,*
*It cloys, we spurn it, and another call.*] Dr. Young has copied this passage in his Night Thoughts, as he has done many others of the last two hundred verses of the present book: the copy, however, to which I now refer, is rather a paraphrase than a close imitation. It has poetic merit and moral excellence; but is deteriorated by verbal iterations repeated till they become tedious:

Behold the picture of earth's happiest man!
He *calls* his wish, it comes, he sends it back,
And says he *call'd* another—that arrives,
Meets the same welcome, yet he still *calls* on,
Till one *calls* him who varies not his *call*;
But holds him fast in *chains* of darkness bound
Till nature dies, and judgment sets him *free*;
A *freedom* how less welcome than his *chains*!

Nec minus ille diu jam non erit, ex hodierno 1105
Lumine qui finem vitaï fecit, et ille,
Mensibus atque annis qui multis obcidit ante.

---

Ver. 1133. *To him who yesterday the light forsook,*
*Than him who died full many a year before.*]
In the note on ver. 1076, I have given an instance of Dryden's version of a few lines of Lucretius, which were afterwards adopted by Pope in his translation of the Iliad. I have now to offer another instance of similar fosterage and intertexture. The passage before us is thus rendered by Dryden:

When once the Fates have cut the mortal thread,
The man as much to all intents is dead,
Who dies to-day, and will as long be so,
As he who died a thousand years ago.

In the Essay on Man, they occur thus, in a converse form, obviously introduced from Dryden's paraphrase; for Lucretius says nothing of "*a thousand* years."

The blest *to-day is* as completely *so*
*As who began a thousand years ago.* Ep. i.

Jortin has some Latin verses of such singular elegance and pathos, and so appropriate with the grand idea conveyed in the last five verses of this book, that I cannot possibly avoid copying and translating them: they are a free imitation of the exquisite epitaph of Moschus upon Bion, which I have already given in the note on v. 937.

Hei mihi! lege rata sol occidit atque resurgit,
Lunaque mutatæ reparat dispendia formæ:
Sidera, purpurei telis extincta diei,
Rursus nocte vigent: humiles telluris alumni,
Graminis herba virens, et florum picta propago,
Quos crudelis hyems lethali tabe peredit;
Cum Zephyri vox blanda vocat, rediitque sereni
Temperies anni, redivivo e cespite surgunt.
Nos, Domini rerum! nos, magna et pulchra minati!
Cum breve ver vitæ, robustaque transiit æstas,
Deficimus; neque nos ordo revolubilis auras
Reddit in ætherias, tumuli nec claustra resolvit.

By punctual laws the sun ascends, and sets;
The waning moon new majesty begets;
Slain by the jav'lins of the purple day,
The stars revive at midnight: every spray,
Each blade of grass, the pictur'd race of flowers,
That, with fierce phang, the wint'ry wind devours,
When Spring returns, at Zephyr's kindling voice,
Peep from the greensward, and again rejoice.
We, lords of all! we, big with bold emprize!
When once the spring, the flower of manhood flies,

To him who yesterday the light forsook,
Than him who died full many a year before.

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Sink—void of laws to burst the marble tomb,
To ether call us, and with life relume.

Beattie has several exquisitely beautiful and plaintive stanzas on the same subject. It would occupy too much space to copy the whole, but I cannot avoid transcribing the following:

'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more;
I mourn—but, ye woodlands! I mourn not for you;
For morn is approaching your charms to restore,
Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glitt'ring with dew.
Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn,—
Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save:—
But when shall Spring visit the mouldering urn!
O when shall it dawn on the *night of the grave!*

It is probable, however, that both Jortin and Beattie have been partly indebted for the ideas conveyed in these passages, to that unrivalled and inexhaustible treasure of sublimity and pathos, the book of Job, which thus offers us a parallel description in Ch. xiv. v. 7—10.

7 כי יש לעץ תקוה
אם יכרת ועוד יחלף
ויונקתו לא תחדל׃
8 אם יזקין בארץ שרשו
ובעפר ימות גזעו׃
9 מריח מים יפרח
ועשה קציר כמו נטע׃
10 וגבר ימות ויחלש
וינוע אדם ואיו׃

7 When falls the tree, hope still the fall survives;
The fractur'd stock re-pullulates and thrives.
8 Though sunk in years its root, its trunk in death,
9 Once let it scent the fountain's fragrant breath,
Its dormant spirit shall renew its power,
New tresses foliate, and new budlets flower.
10 But man departs—exhausts life's little span,
Yields up his quiv'ring breath—and where is man?

Nothing can equal the boldness or the beauty of the phrase in ver. 9, of this exquisite passage: ריח מים "the fragrance," or rather, "the fragrant *exhalation* of water." The Arabians still employ the very same term ريح to express the same idea of *breath*, *fragrance*, or *exhalation*, indiscriminately. Yet, is the phrase neither more bold nor more beautiful than the catachresis, in the latter part of the same verse, of *hair* or *tresses* (קציר) for *branches* or *foliage*. Our common version interprets this word by the tamer term *boughs*; but the vulgate preserves the image in its full force: "*faciet* COMAM *quasi cum primum* PLANTATUM *est*."

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